

Question Time haunted by Spectator at the feast



Peacock favours flogging

I thought I saw John Major glance warily at Tony Blair at Prime Minister's Questions yesterday. Toby Jessel (C. Twickenham) had called on Major to declare that there would always be a Royal Yacht Britannia.

Unable to give such a promise, the PM watched Blair from the corner of his eye. In Blair's new drive for the Alf Garnett vote, it is all too possible that the next Blair lecture in political ethics at The Spectator will include as its centrepiece "Vote Labour and save the Royal Yacht Britannia".

And I saw the same wary glance when Madam Speaker called Elizabeth Peacock (C. Batley & Spen) to question

the Prime Minister. The Chamber erupted. This lady is going through one of her celebrity phases. Mrs Peacock displays her feathers rarely — but when she does wow!

The last time we heard of Peacock was nearly three years ago, in 1992. She stunned her party by rebelling against the closure (which affected her constituency) of coal pits. It was brave. She was on every news bulletin and most television screens. Her photograph graced the front pages of newspapers. She was mobbed by journalists for about a fortnight.

Then the curtain fell. Peacock has no need for continu-

MATTHEW PARRIS

POLITICAL SKETCH

ous publicity. A quick burst every few years will do.

Well, it's that time of the decade again. Last weekend, Elizabeth Peacock was on all our screens with a new plan for criminal justice. She thinks certain lawbreakers should be publicly flogged on television as part of the National Lottery draw every Saturday. She has not yet decided whether the flogging should be before the draw, as a sort of *apéritif*, or after it, with the cigars.

Yesterday she did not elab-

orate. She simply told Mr Major that there was "massive public support for the reintroduction of corporal punishment". From behind him came growls of support from Tory backbenchers.

But it was not to them that the PM was listening. It seemed to me that he was cocking an ear across the floor, in case there should be an admonitory "hear, hear," from Tony Blair. Unable to promise Mrs Peacock the public floggings she desired, Major was alive to the danger

of the next Spectator lecture but one: "Bircher Blair says Labour will flog jobs".

Still, the afternoon had one delicate moment, after Dennis Skinner yelled at Junior Agriculture Minister Angela Browning over dioxane levels in Bolsover. Skinner always yells. Ministers always yell back. It's a tradition with which both sides are comfortable. Yesterday, the trim, poised, well-groomed Mrs Browning broke it. She paused, gazed tenderly at Dennis, murmured that she was very concerned about dioxane levels — and invited the man they call the Beast of Bolsover to come and see her, to tell her more. Skinner's mouth dropped. Nobody is

ever nice to him. He had no idea how to react. We all remember what happened when Beauty kissed the Beast. Could it happen again?

The jolly part of the day ended with a rare knockout for MPs in the continuing *Members vs The Press* contest. MPs are furious with newspaper reports that the House has arranged for itself a three-day week. During business questions they demanded an opportunity to debate this slander.

The Chamber was nearly full. The Press Gallery was almost empty. Craning their necks up at where we should have been, both sides of the House united in the shout: "Where are they?"

Closure of air bases will save £23m

RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire, from which the Dambusters launched their raid against Germany, is to close in April 1996 as part of defence cuts, the Government confirmed last night.

Nicholas Soames, Armed Forces Minister, said the closure of RAF Scampton, home to the Red Arrows, and the closure of RAF Finningley in South Yorkshire would save £23 million a year. The Ministry of Defence said most of the 510 service personnel at Scampton and 615 at Finningley would be transferred to other bases.

Hospital beat

A police station has been opened inside Morrish Hospital in Swansea to combat the rise in violence against staff and thefts from patients. PC Gareth James patrols the wards and corridors with a side-handled baton.

Kray funeral

Reggie Kray, the gangland killer, has been granted leave from prison next week to attend the funeral of his twin brother Ronnie, 61, who died of a heart attack on Friday. The funeral in Bethnal Green, east London, is expected to attract large crowds.

MP's separation

Winston Churchill, the Conservative MP for Darnley, and his wife Minnie have announced their separation after 30 years of marriage. A statement from Walker Martineau, the London solicitors, said they remained on good terms.

Hurley jury out

The jury in the Elizabeth Hurley mugging trial will retire today after a warning from the judge to ignore the celebrity status of the actress. Miss Hurley, 29, has told Southwark Crown Court that a gang of four girls robbed her at knifepoint.

Farms pay rise

Farm workers in England and Wales are to receive a 3 per cent pay rise, the National Farmers Union said yesterday. The award, worth £4.35 a week, will raise the minimum wage for a 39-hour week to £149.44 and cost the industry £40 million a year.

Tunnel saviour

An AA patrolman came to the rescue of a Channel Tunnel train that broke down four miles into its journey. Dick Osborne, 45, secured a damaged panel with nylon strap from his breakdown van after engineers struggled for three hours without success.

Prince hits out over bad English used by Americans

By JOHN O'LEARY, EDUCATION EDITOR

THE Prince of Wales highlighted the threat to "proper English" from the spread of American vernacular yesterday as he launched a campaign to preserve the language as a world leader.

He described American English as "very corrupting" and stressed the need to maintain the quality of language, after giving his backing to the British Council's English 2000 project. He said his concerns were both cultural and commercial.

At least 800 million people speak English worldwide, but increasing competition from the America and Australia is threatening Britain's leading position in the lucrative language teaching market. The English 2000 project is intended to protect the country's £500 million share of a global growth industry.

The Prince said: "It is impossible to overestimate the advantage the English language gives us in the world."

He added: "We must act now to ensure that English, and that to my way of thinking means English, maintains its position as the world language well into the next century."

Three quarters of the world's mail was written in English and four-fifths of all electronic information was stored in English, he said. "It is impossible to over-estimate the advantages the English language gives us in the world. The figures are staggering."

Speaking after the launch, Prince Charles elaborated on his view of the American influence. "People tend to invent all sorts of nouns and verbs, and make words that

shouldn't be. I think we have to be a bit careful, otherwise the whole thing can get rather a mess."

In the long term, the British Council fears that instantaneous translation could see English replaced as the main international language by Chinese within three generations. The countries of the Pacific Rim will be among the main targets of English 2000, which will help develop new products and use the Internet to widen access to courses.

Other areas of increasing competition between British and American English include India, Eastern Europe and parts of Latin America. More than 30,000 Indian students now study in American colleges and universities, compared with 2,000 in Britain.

The council's five-year campaign will bring together publishers, universities, examination boards and media groups. Among the projects under consideration is an educational satellite and cable television service planned by Sir David Putnam, the film maker.

Roger Bowers, the council's assistant director general, said: "I don't have any difficulty with people learning whatever branch of English they like. But when we are marketing British English, we are not only making a contribution to invisible exports, we are also helping to keep British standing as high as it is in many parts of the world."

Dr Bowers said the status of the English language was the main reason Britain still held a seat on the United Nations Security Council.

Leading article, page 17



An elderly couple enjoy the fine weather in London's St James's Park yesterday as John Major and his parliamentary secretary, John Ward, stroll past

Major supports 'friend' Archer

JOHN MAJOR pledged unqualified support for Lord Archer last night as the Tory peer faced fresh demands to explain his role in an Anglia Television share deal days before a takeover of the company (Arthur Leathley writes).

The Prime Minister went further than before in giving his full personal backing for the millionaire author as a Labour MP pressed Mr Major for a review of insider trading laws. Mr Major was reluctant to voice public support for Lord Archer last summer when the former Tory party deputy chairman was at the heart of a Trade and Industry

Department inquiry into Anglia share-dealing.

But the Prime Minister reacted yesterday to an MP's reference to his friendship with the peer by saying: "I am happy to confirm that Lord Archer is my friend, has been my friend and will remain my friend in the future."

Mr Major was responding to a Commons question from Dale Campbell-Savours, Labour MP for Worthing, who was suspended in January for linking Lord Archer with "criminal activity" over the share deal. Lord Archer was cleared of insider dealing by DTI inspectors.

Whips keep Tory MP off committee

A FORMER Conservative minister last night accused government whips of barring him from a Commons committee because he had refused to give a loyalty pledge (Nicholas Wood writes).

Robert Jackson, a former science minister, said he was "hoping mad" about the refusal of the whips to allow him to serve on the committee scrutinising the Bill to privatise the research side of the Atomic Energy Authority. Mr Jackson said he had a direct interest because Harwell in Oxfordshire, the main site of the organisation, was in his Wantage constituency.

Political talks with Sinn Fein depend on arms handover

By PHILIP WEBSTER, NICHOLAS WATT AND JILL SHERMAN

THE Prime Minister made it clear yesterday that the IRA must hand over weapons before it could be admitted to full-scale political talks on the future of Northern Ireland.

Mr Major gave the assurance to James Moynihan, the Ulster Unionist leader, in the Commons as it became clear that a dispute over a single word, "demilitarisation", stands between Sinn Fein and a first meeting with ministers.

Ministers made it plain last night that the Government is seeking a commitment from Sinn Fein to discuss the removal of "illegally held weapons" before it can see a minister in the exploratory phase of talks. The more substantive political talks could be some way off.

Even so there is optimism in Whitehall that Sinn Fein, under strong pressure to move after the admission to ministerial talks of loyalist leaders, will eventually give the Government what it wants. Talks are thought to be likely soon.

Martin McGuinness, who is leading the Sinn Fein delegation in its exploratory talks with government officials, sent the proposed agenda back earlier this week after adding demilitarisation to the section on decommissioning. That is unacceptable to ministers because the concept would include the disbandment of the Royal Ulster Constabulary and sending all troops from the mainland back to Britain.

Further contacts were taking place yesterday to try to pave the way for talks. Although Sinn Fein last night accused the Government of stalling the peace process by refusing to allow the party to hold talks with ministers, Mitchell McLaughlin, its national chairman, predicted that talks would be held soon after the usual "semantic debate".

In the Commons Mr Moynihan said loyalist paramilitary bodies had undertaken to dismantle their terrorist apparatus. He asked Mr Major: "Is it still the policy of the Government that the same must apply to the IRA before they can be admitted to any further talks or discussions on any other issues?" The Prime Minister replied: "Yes."

But he added that political talks were "some way down the road" — after the discussions on modalities have been completed and after there has been substantial progress on decommissioning.

Dick Spring, Ireland's Deputy Prime Minister, said yesterday that he was disappointed that British ministers were still not prepared to talk to Sinn Fein. Speaking during a visit to Belfast Mr Spring warned the Government not to squander the opportunity for peace.

Mr McLaughlin said that his party would be willing to discuss the decommissioning of weapons within the wider context of demilitarisation. "Everyone, including the British Government, has said that in real peace talks every issue must be on the agenda," the Sinn Fein chairman said.



McGuinness: amendments

TOP EARNERS 1994		
	Salary	Total salary + benefits
Dr Derek Roberts	University College London	117,499 138,822
Sir Colin Doherty	Royal Postgrad. Medical Sch	108,480 128,758
Sir Kenneth Green	Manchester Metro University	117,859 126,889
Prof Graham Zink	Queen Mary and Westfield Col	105,000 120,000
Prof Roger Williams	Reading University	103,000 118,170
Prof Kenneth Barker	De Montfort University, Leicester	107,000 114,007
Prof Ray Cowell	Nottingham Trent University	104,000 114,000
Dr Malcolm Green	British Postgrad Medical Fed	107,848 110,801
Dr Kenneth Edwards	Leicester University	95,534 110,587
Dr Anthony Kelly	Surrey University	97,000 110,425

Academics' pay

Continued from page 1

Of the 28 institutions disclosing packages worth more than £100,000, eight were formerly polytechnics. Sir David Williams, vice-chancellor of Cambridge University, received earnings and benefits totalling £109,302 — 12th overall.

Dr Peter North, vice-chancellor of Oxford University, received a salary of £76,626 — less than his counterpart, Dr Clive Booth, at Oxford Brookes University, the former polytechnic. Dr North moved ahead, however, when pensions were included, with his package totalling £90,000.

Vice-chancellors' salaries were a closely guarded secret until John Patten, the former Education Secretary, ordered that they should be publicly declared last year. Peter Knight, vice-chancellor of the University of Central England at Birmingham, argued at the time that disclosure of salaries would prove inflationary, sparking an unseemly pay scramble. The survey highlights large variations in pay, with the heads of the Royal College of Music and

Dartington College propping up the table with earnings hovering around £50,000.

Vice-chancellors are not the best-paid academics. Eleven other members of staff, all from institutions with large medical schools which often have to attract working doctors, were listed as earning more than £100,000 without pension rights. Three at University College London were on more than £120,000.

A number of traditional universities such as Bristol, Birmingham, Liverpool, Leeds, Nottingham, Sheffield and York, did not take part in the survey. Universities in the survey varied in the way they defined benefits.

David Triesman, general secretary of the Association of University Teachers, said: "I have no problem with vice-chancellors being well-paid. But there is a problem of fairness that their pay appears to have risen in a time when staff have received a series of setbacks." A professor at Oxford University can expect to receive between £35,000 and £40,000. Lecturers elsewhere can earn as little as £15,000.

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'He was goading and taunting me. His face appeared to be contorted with hatred or rage'

Cantona tells how fan's abuse drove him to violence

By RICHARD DUCE

A TORRENT of abuse was directed against Eric Cantona before he launched a karate kick against a football fan whose face, he said, was "contorted with hatred", magistrates were told yesterday.

Jeffrey McCann, for the prosecution, said the Manchester United midfielder was sent off in the second half of a match in front of a capacity 18,000 crowd at the Crystal Palace ground, Selhurst Park, in south London on January 25. Witnesses later stated that Matthew Simmons, from south London, had left his seat in the 11th row of the stands and had rushed to the front, where he subjected Cantona to a tirade of abuse as the player left the pitch.

In a statement read to Croydon Magistrates Court, Cantona said: "Shortly after half time I was dismissed from the field for an offence against an opponent. I was angry and frustrated with myself at my dismissal, but did not protest to the referee.

"In my opinion, his decision was correct, although I had been repeatedly and painfully fouled in the course of the match. As I was leaving the field and making my way towards the players' tunnel I was deeply disappointed with myself for what had happened.

"I then became aware of a man to my right near the front of the spectators' terraces, one of a number who seemed to be shouting and gesticulating at me. At first I could not hear what he was saying but it was very soon clear that he was goading and taunting me because of my sending off. His face appeared to be contorted with hatred or rage and he was making an obscene gesture. He was shouting in abusive, insulting and racist or nationalistic terms."

He added: "I was obviously hurt and insulted and with the addition of this to my existing frustration I reacted in a way I now deeply regret, by jumping



Isabelle Cantona, above, the footballer's pregnant wife, refused to answer questions as she left her home in Boothstown, Greater Manchester, yesterday afternoon to collect their son, Raphael, from school. She was later joined by police as she prepared to welcome her husband home after he had been granted bail.

not been for efficient policing and stewardship the incident could have "escalated into major public disorder. There is a wealth of people who were horrified by the incident."

Mr Simmons, a window fitter, later claimed to police that he had been on his way to the lavatory and had simply shouted: "Off, off, off. Go on Cantona, have an early shower."

The prosecution had video evidence of the assault by Cantona from television pictures but the magistrate said that they did not need to see it. David Poole, QC, for the defence, said: "He deeply regrets what he did. He wishes me to apologise to everybody who was affected by this incident."

He said Cantona, a sometimes "volatile and tempestuous" footballer, had been bitterly disappointed for being sent off. "One of them was hell bent on trouble and that man was not Mr Cantona," said Mr Poole.

"He [Simmons] was determined to put himself in a position from which he could with maximum hurtful effect launch a stream of foul and humiliating abuse directly into Mr Cantona's ear."

Mr Poole added that Mr Simmons had gone to "considerable trouble" to launch a torrent of abuse at Cantona. "He was one of that regrettable minority who put xenophobia before any love of soccer and to express that xenophobia that footballers who are black or from overseas have to endure."

Mr Poole said he regarded as an "utter falsehood" Mr Simmons's recollection of events and there were numerous other independent witnesses supporting Cantona's version. "They were words designed to taunt, to goad and to provoke."

He said the taunts were aimed against Cantona's nationality, his sexual integrity and the sexual integrity of his mother. "Unhappily in his determination to goad and provoke, Mr Simmons succeeded in provoking Mr Cantona in a moment he will always regret."

"Mr Cantona does not seek to justify his actions in terms of what Mr Simmons did. Justification does not come into it, but there is no doubt as to the provocation which was serious and severe," Mr Poole said.

He highlighted Cantona's previous good character off the pitch, saying he was "a man of positively good character acting out of character in a moment of extreme distress."

Mr Poole said Cantona, of Worsley, near Manchester, had been fined two weeks' wages by his club - some £10,800. The Football Association had further fined him £10,000 and banned him from playing until two months into the next football season. He argued that Cantona should be given a conditional discharge.

The French footballer added that he wished to deny suggestions in the media that he had ignored police requests for an interview. "I can only say these reports are inaccurate and I have broken no appointments."

Cantona jailed, page 1



Cantona attacks Matthew Simmons. It was, said the footballer's lawyer, a moment he would always regret

BIOGRAPHY

- 1966: Born in Paris.
- 1983: Professional debut for Auxerre.
- 1987: Heavy fine for giving own team's goalkeeper black eye. First French cap.
- 1988: Joins Marseilles for £2 million. Banned from French team for one year after swearing at national coach.
- 1989: Suspended indefinitely by Marseilles after kicking ball into crowd and throwing shirt at referee. Moves to Montpellier for £300,000.
- 1990: Banned by Montpellier for ten days after smashing boots into face of teammate. Returns to Marseilles.
- 1991: Signs for Nimes. Banned for three games after throwing ball at referee. Calls each disciplinary committee member an idiot. Ban increased to two months.
- 1992: Trial with Sheffield Wednesday. Walks out and joins Leeds for £900,000. Helps Elland Road side to win League title before moving to Manchester United in £1.2 million deal.
- 1993: Fined £1,000 by FA for spitting at Leeds fan. Sent off in United's European Cup defeat by Galatasaray. Banned by Uefa for four European games.
- 1994: Banned for five games after being sent off twice in four days. Wins third successive championship medal.
- 1995: Attacks Crystal Palace fan. Banned by France and Manchester United for rest of season. Suspended until September 30, 1995, and fined £10,000 by FA. March 23: Jail term imposed.

Magistrate who takes firm line

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

THE magistrate who imposed a two-week prison sentence on Eric Cantona is a retired teacher who has been chairwoman of the bench at Croydon for three months.

Jean Pearce, 53, has been a magistrate for several years. Yesterday, a source of Croydon Magistrates' Court said that, as chairwoman, she had gained a reputation as a firm but fair disciplinarian.

When considering sentence, Mrs Pearce will have taken into account the footballer's guilty plea and his defence counsel's citing of his previous good behaviour and work for charity.

But, to gasps in court, she told Cantona that since he was looked up to by young people as a gifted and prominent public figure, two weeks' jail was the only appropriate sentence.

Home Office guidelines allow magistrates to impose a



Mrs Pearce: retired teacher

maximum jail term of six months and a fine of £5,000 for common assault.

Mrs Pearce was head of a Roman Catholic primary school in Purley and then a supply music teacher. She and her husband John, an engineer, have four adult children.

Male police officer wins sex discrimination case

By MARIANNE CURPHEY

A POLICE sergeant has won a sex-discrimination case against his employers who, he claims, told him to back down in a dispute with a woman colleague because "you can't hope to win against a woman these days".

Sergeant Leslie White, 47, said that he was not given an adequate chance to defend himself against allegations of harassment. He claimed his superiors forced him to transfer stations after he referred to WPC Maureen McGinley, 34, as "an imposing feminist" and "a dangerous woman".

WPC McGinley, who alleged that Sergeant White had spread lies about her, was awarded £2,000 compensation in a separate hearing. Sergeant White claimed that he had been treated less fairly as a man because the Metropolitan Police were "terrified of any complaint of discrimina-

tion as far as women are concerned". In a case believed to be the first of its kind in the force, an industrial tribunal at Woburn Place, central London, yesterday found in favour of Sergeant White. It will give reasons for the decision in a fortnight's time.

Sergeant White's counsel, Christopher Frere-Smith, had told the tribunal that the force had intended "to sweep this case under the carpet regardless of the cost to Sergeant White". Afterwards, he said that he and his client were delighted and would be lodging a claim for costs and compensation.

During the hearing, Sergeant White, a policeman for 23 years, described how his 21-year marriage had broken down in the face of allegations about his treatment of women. His wife refused to believe he was telling the truth.

Sergeant White, who lives in Sussex, had been given the task of taking WPC McGinley "under his wing" when she arrived at West End Central police station from Hendon training college. During a conversation with fellow officers he had described why WPC McGinley was disliked by some of her colleagues and said some officers thought she was "a dangerous woman". He claimed he had not been expressing his personal opinion at the time.

Monica Cars-Prisk, counsel for the Metropolitan Police, told the tribunal that Sergeant White had not been transferred as a punishment and had been given a choice of stations. She said: "It is not and never has been policy of the Metropolitan Police to discriminate against or in favour of anyone, male or female."

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Milkman is latest victim of inexorable exodus of shoppers and retailers to out-of-town centres

Job losses hammer another nail in the high street's coffin

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

THE latest job losses at Northern Foods have fuelled gloomy forecasts that Britain is witnessing the death of the high street.

The relentless development of out-of-town shopping centres, vast superstores and hypermarkets has tempted millions of shoppers away from traditional stores, leaving behind a growing list of high-profile casualties. On Wednesday JH Dewhurst, the butcher's chain, went into receivership and last month Thorn EMI announced the closure of the Rumbelows electrical chain, both apparent victims of the explosive growth in the past decade of out-of-town retailing.

In 1983, Britons did less than a tenth of their shopping in out-of-town stores, compared with a quarter today. That growth has been led by

the success of the supermarkets, which have gradually increased their stranglehold on the minds — and wallets — of the British shopper.

Today the top eight supermarket chains account for almost two-thirds of all spending on food, compared with less than 40 per cent in 1987.

RETAILER

Their success has come at the expense of specialist retailers such as butchers and greengrocers, as well as corner shops.

In 1961, there were 116,000 independent grocers in Britain, but 20 years later this figure had more than halved to 45,000. Since then there has been a further decline to about 31,000.

Christopher Haskins, chair-

man of Northern Foods, said: "The effect on the specialists has been devastating. Just think about it. How many fruit-and-veg shops or butchers do you see nowadays? Not many. Consumers prefer to go to their nearest supermarket."

Hilary Monk of Verdick, a retail research firm, agreed: "This is all consumer led. Out-of-town shopping is convenient and easy. Consumers can get in their cars, park easily and there is more choice when they get there."

The high street no longer fits in with the lifestyles of most Britons. The population is moving away from cities and towns, car ownership is growing, and a rise in the number of women who work means families have less time for shopping.

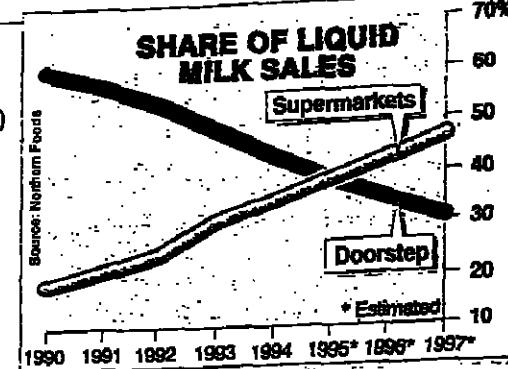
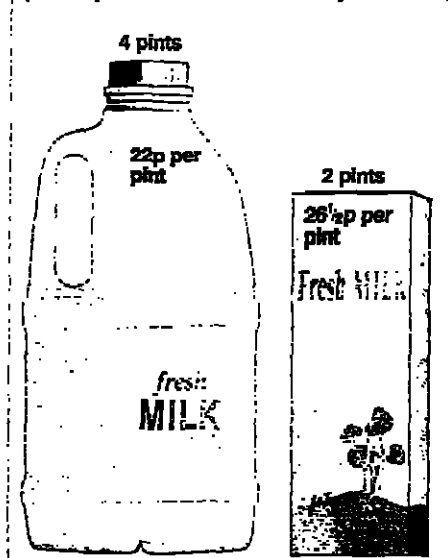
These trends favour a once-weekly trip to an out-of-town



Doorstep sales have been falling as a share of the milk market for many years, from about 80 per cent in the early 1980s to 40 per cent now

THE PRICE OF A PINTA

IN THE SUPERMARKET (Safeway, Waitrose, Asda, Sainsbury and Tesco)



ON THE DOORSTEP	
Unigate	39p
Wales	40p
South and SW	41p
London	41p
MD Foods	37p
London and North	37p
Yorkshire	36p
North London	40/41

development. "Fifteen years ago people would shop nearly every day. It was a full-time business for wives. Now it's something they want to get over and done with in one go," Mr Haskins said.

It is not just consumers for whom out-of-town shopping is appealing. Retailers benefit from economies of scale. They can sell bigger volumes of products than on the high

street and at lower cost. Rents on the high street are still double those outside the town centre. In the new retailing environment of low growth, low inflation and intense competition, the logic is compelling.

But Ms Monk says that the high street may not be beyond resuscitation. "There is a future for the high street but there needs to be more invest-

ment, particularly in better service and better parking," she said.

She believes the high street will increasingly become the home to fashion retailers and small specialists, while larger stores will expand out of town. "There is cause for concern," she says. "But there is no need for panic."

Dairy job losses, page 1

Milk deregulation 'merely created a private monopoly'

By MICHAEL HORNSBY

MOST farmers believe that rationalisation of the dairy industry was long overdue after more than 60 years in which companies were largely insulated from the discipline of competition.

Last November, the Milk Marketing Board, a state-run monopoly which, since 1933, had bought all the milk farmers produced, selling it to dairies at a fixed price, was abolished. This left farmers free, in theory, to sell to the highest bidder. In practice, about 60 per cent of farmers chose to join Milk Marque, a voluntary co-operative which, it is estimated, controls about 50 per cent of all milk produced and which is run largely by the same officials who ran the old board.

Dairy companies say that the Government, in effect, has allowed a private, unregulated monopoly to replace a state-controlled one, and that Milk Marque abused its position last year to bid up the price of milk paid to farmers to levels which most dairy companies could not match. The attempt to create a free market in milk was flawed from the outset, the dairy companies say, because European Union milk production quotas limit output in Britain to about 85 per cent of consumption, so that demand always exceeds supply. However, Milk Marque says that Northern Foods' problems have little directly to do with deregulation. Andrew Darc, the co-operative's chief executive, said yesterday: "The vast majority of their dairy rationalisation has occurred in their doorstep, bottled-milk business. This has been caused by price wars in the supermarkets and discounters which have been taking trade from the doorstep sector for several years."

Doorstep sales have been falling as a share of the market for more than 15 years, dropping from about 80 per cent in the early 1980s to 40 per cent now. With the price of the supermarket pint aver-

aging about 26p, compared with 39p on the doorstep, this trend is set to continue.

Deregulation did push up the price of raw milk to dairies and hence to supermarkets, and since November 1 retail prices have risen by about 7 per cent, with bigger increases for products such as cheese.

Stephen Locke, of the Consumers' Association, said: "There could be case for the Office of Fair Trading looking at the way Milk Marque has operated to see if there has been any abuse." One answer, he suggested, might be to break Milk Marque up into regional co-operatives.



Stowell Park, Gloucestershire: Lord Vestey's home

Cool thinking was key to success

By LIN JENKINS

THE VESTEY family, one of Britain's wealthiest, which saw Dewhurst's, a pillar of their business empire crash when it could not reach agreement with its bankers, made their fortune in less than a hundred years. They were once reputed to be worth £1.4 billion, but *The Sunday Times* league table of Britain's richest people last year ranked them 17th, with an estimated wealth of £600 million.

The fortune stems from two brothers, William and Edmund, born in 1866, who identified the potential of refrigeration and adapted it to their father's profession as a provisions broker.

Throughout the years the Vestey family have always been active in business and private life, courted controversy. Skilful tax avoidance helped them to accumulate and keep their fortune.

The Paris Trust, established in 1919, through which family funds were handled, made the brothers and their heirs the richest family in Britain after the house of Windsor. The Inland Revenue spent 60 years trying to raid their tax shelter but a celebrated legal case in the early 1980s resulted in success for the family.

Edmund Vestey, now 64, chairman of the Masters of Foxhounds Association and with his cousin Lord (Sam) Vestey, 53, co-owner of the Vestey empire, said at the

time: "We all have to try to pay as little tax as we can in this rough, tough world."

The polo-playing Lord Vestey, the most colourful member of the family, has a close relationship with the Prince of Wales, and his wife, Celia Knight, is godmother to Prince Harry. Since 1991, however, the family has been

obliged to sell assets, including vast Australian cattle farms, and to axe 20,000 jobs.

Edmund's eldest son, Tim, 35, who had been put in charge of trying to save the firm in 1990, fell out with the family elders and early this year severed day-to-day ties with the group.



Lord Vestey: colourful

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Painting Lowry for friends fetch a million
A PICTURE that Lord Vestey painted for £5 for an artist friend, fetched £75,000 and was sold at Christie's in London yesterday. John Stow, the Organ Grinder, was a Manchester, was a wedding present to Lord Vestey and his wife, Celia. It was one of the top 10 paintings in the collection of 14 Lowry paintings to be sold at a packed saleroom bid for a total of £550,000. On...

'No lookout' as Bowbelle bore down on Marchioness

Dredger went too fast says 'forgotten' witness

By Emma Wilkins

A WITNESS to the Marchioness pleasure boat disaster said yesterday that he saw the dredger, Bowbelle, travelling fast and without a lookout before the collision.

Anthony Kenny, a health and safety officer for British Telecom, whose account has never been heard, said the dredger bore down on the pleasure boat at high speed during a clear, moonlit night on the Thames in August 1989.

He told a jury at Hammer-smith Coroner's Court, west London, that he had a clear view from Southwark Bridge of the moments before the crash. "I must admit that as soon as I saw it I had a strange feeling ... That boat was going too fast," he said.

Mr Kenny, who did not give evidence at an earlier inquest or at two trials of Douglas Henderson, master of the Bowbelle, had leant over Southwark Bridge to examine the dredger. The Marchioness had already passed. "I made a



Kenny saw moments leading up to crash

conscious effort to lean over the balustrade to look at the Bowbelle to see if there were any lookouts," Mr Kenny said. "There was definitely no one standing on the front end. I particularly noticed it because I thought it was quite dangerous."

Juries in two trials failed to reach verdicts on Captain

Henderson's handling of his boat and he was formally cleared of failing to provide a proper lookout.

Mr Kenny, who believed his evidence was important, had voluntarily contacted John Burton, the West London Coroner, in order to give his account, the jury was told.

While he did not witness the impact, Mr Kenny heard a loud thump after the Bowbelle had passed beneath Southwark Bridge. Then he heard shouting and saw people's heads in the water. He ran for help and later helped to guide a police launch to survivors.

Mr Kenny insisted that before the Marchioness passed underneath Southwark Bridge it had been travelling on the north side of the river. Andrew McGowan, mate of the Marchioness, told the inquest earlier that the boat's usual course was along the south bank.

Peter Strachan-Cowie and his friend Keith Fawkes Underwood, who were standing outside the Anchor pub on the

south of the river between Southwark and Cannon Street bridges, with a direct view of the collision, agreed that the Bowbelle was going too fast.

Mr Strachan-Cowie said: "After the Marchioness had come through the bridge, there was a large black shape in the middle of the river moving far too fast. Anything in its way would not have stood a chance. By this time the Marchioness had practically stopped. It was pointing slightly towards the north bank. The freighter struck the pleasure boat, which tilted and sank immediately."

According to the official Marine Accident Investigation Bureau report, the collision took place after the Marchioness turned towards the path of the Bowbelle. But Mr Strachan-Cowie, who was interviewed by bureau investigators, said there was no dramatic change of direction.

"The Marchioness was almost stationary. It wasn't a sudden change of course," he said. The hearing continues.



The Reads with the gate installed across their drive by Stanley Skelton, right. Now he must take it down

Couple win war of the garden gate

A MAN who blocked his neighbours' access with a 20ft-wide locked steel gate has been ordered to remove it and pay £1,500 damages. During the two-day hearing at Barnsley County Court, which ended on Wednesday, Judge Hunt had to intervene to stop the neighbours shouting at each other.

Last July, Stanley Skelton, 71, put a gate across the drive he shared with Frank Read, 82, and his wife Winifred, 86, in Malby, South Yorkshire. In a previous dispute, Mr Skelton had been bound over to keep the peace after threatening Mr Read's daughter. The

Reads, retired teachers, claimed that the gate made them virtual prisoners, and last summer police were called when neighbours protested outside Mr Skelton's home in support of the couple.

Mr Read, who was seeking to have the gate removed, told the court that he had argued with Mr Skelton about access for years. Mr Skelton claimed that the deeds to his property gave him the right to decide who had access.

"His verbal abuse has been the worst," Mr Read said. "I don't know what caused it. I have always been

decent to him. His behaviour has put a strain on my family. Once when he was shouting at us my wife asked me to fetch a doctor. She felt she was going to have a nervous breakdown. If I had been a younger man, I would have been tempted to thump him."

Judge Hunt, who awarded costs against Mr Skelton, compared him to the grumpy character in the BBC sitcom *One Foot in the Grave*. "Mr Skelton has set himself up as the arbiter of who are proper people to visit the Reads. It's rather like Victor Meldrew without the humorous side."

Revolt spreads as 20 schools defy cutbacks

By Ben Preston, Education Correspondent

THE revolt against education cuts gathered pace yesterday as governing bodies from more than 20 schools in Warwickshire became the first to submit illegal deficit budgets.

In a step calculated to increase pressure on the Government, governors refused to propose savings which might involve sacking teachers or increasing class sizes and submitted plans that would put their schools into the red. The move could force Warwickshire County Council to take financial control of the schools, triggering a crisis if more governing bodies follow. "Ministers will watch events nervously to see whether the tactics are copied in other authorities' areas," as some governors have threatened, prolonging the spending row into the summer. Governing bodies at two schools in Shropshire and Derbyshire have already resigned rather than impose cuts.

Governors in Warwickshire have been angered by plans to cut £9 million from the county's education budget, leaving schools facing a 5 per cent cut. The Labour-led council has not been able to fund next year's 2.7 per cent teachers' pay increase.

Councillors have set aside a £1.1 million hardship fund to

ease the plight of the worst-hit schools. But a spokesman said the council was severely limited by the Government's budget cap, which allows it to increase total spending by only 0.5 per cent.

Officials emphasised yesterday that the council would explore every option to avoid taking over the school budgets. Eric Wood, the county's deputy chief education officer, said that withdrawing financial delegation from the schools would be considered only as a last resort and "undertaken only after every other avenue was explored". But he added: "Setting an inappropriate budget will not solve the problem."

Governors have the right to appeal directly to Gillian Shephard, the Education Secretary, should Warwickshire attempt to take control of any school. Protesters have indicated they will exercise this option to slow the process.

Will Clare, governor at the Willows primary school in Stratford-upon-Avon, said the Government was the target of yesterday's action. He said his school faced a shortfall of £25,000. "We hope Mrs Shephard will in some way, at this late stage, make a U-turn and give schools the money they need."



Punch and Judy, which fetched £152,200, was among paintings owned by the Bennetts, below

Paintings Lowry did for friend fetch half a million

A PICTURE that L.S. Lowry painted for £5 for an impoverished friend sold for £75,500 amid frenzied bidding at Christie's in London yesterday (John Shaw writes). The *Organ Grinder*, showing houses in industrial Manchester, was a belated wedding present to Geoffrey and Alice Bennett in 1934.

It was one of the top lots in a group of 14 Lowrys that belonged to Mr Bennett, a close friend of the artist, who later became a clergyman in Cumberland.

Mr Bennett died, aged 89, in 1991. Christie's estimated his paintings to be worth more than £250,000, but a packed saleroom bid them to a total of £530,000. Only one,



a sombre study of two sisters dressed in black, failed to find a buyer. The others doubled or tripled their estimates. The proceeds will be divided between a trust for retired clergymen and a fund for Carlisle Cathedral. Lowry was a frequent visitor to Mr Bennett's house in Cleator Moor, Cumberland, and the district inspired him to produce some of the day's top pictures, including *Punch and Judy*. It depicts a crowd watching the Whit Monday entertainment on the Grey Street recreation ground in Carlisle. The picture, expected to fetch between £60,000 and £90,000, sold for £152,200 to Gavin Ewart Antiques of London.

A press ad, as seen on TV.

In our free market, advertisers need to draw attention to the virtues and benefits of their merchandise.

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At its best, advertising should be a service to the customer - an investment which not only benefits the advertiser, but the audience too.

In 1992, the amount spent in this country on advertising is estimated to have been £8.7 billion.

With a sum of such economic significance - given that we, the public, ultimately fund it - we have the right to expect that it is well spent.

How and where is it most wisely invested?

As with financial investments, there are plenty of ways to spend money and some of them are a great deal less efficient than others.

Take the widespread view of many British advertisers that to reach the mass market (by which they mean you and me), they must go on television.

Television is a powerful medium. With a price-tag to match.

The cost of making a 30 second TV commercial these days is likely to be around £120,000.

That's £4,000 per second. We're not talking here about a mini-epic, just an average commercial.

The really expensive ones go much higher. (Take a deep breath.)

Within the last year there have been TV commercials - naming no names - which cost £1.8 million, £1.2 million and £800,000.

It's baffling how any 60 seconds of celluloid can cost such vast sums when the BBC can make a whole hour of TV drama for a relatively meagre £400,000.

But the costs of television don't stop there. Once you've made the commercial, you still have to air it, and air time is costly.

To screen a 30 second commercial in front of the mass audience (25 million adults) just once - and once only - will cost the advertiser around £220,000 (£340,000 when you include production).

For a third less than that, the same audience could have been reached by full page advertisements in all national daily newspapers.

A press advertisement can be every bit as arresting as any TV commercial.

(Think of the RSPCA's pile of dead dogs.)

There are also many things a press advertisement can do which a TV commercial can't. It can present a viewpoint in depth, as we have done here. These words won't dissolve and vanish after 30 seconds.

If you want to read it again, or check a figure we've quoted, this page will still be here an hour, a day, or a week later.

If you're seriously interested in what we've said, you might cut the page out and keep it for reference.

By contrast, every time the poor TV advertiser wants access to another 30 seconds of your attention, he has no alternative but to spend a further £220,000.

Not that a television commercial could convey a fraction of what we have discussed. How much of this ad can you read out loud in 30 seconds? Not a lot. In actual fact, about as much as on the television screen.

The moral of the story: To make the most of your advertising investment, do it in newspapers.



Council tax bills to rise by twice the rate of inflation

By IAN MURRAY, COMMUNITY CORRESPONDENT

COUNCIL tax will go up by more than double the rate of inflation next month despite cuts of £500 million in local authority services.

Figures for all authorities in England and Wales show that the Government has failed to contain increases to its target figure of 4.6 per cent. The bill for the average Band D property will go up by 5.4 per cent to £558, an extra £30 on last year.

Increases in London will average 7.8 per cent because the Government allowed boroughs a more generous capping limit and some special grants are being phased out. Wales will feel the loss of grants even more, with a rise of 11.9 per cent adding £43 to the average Band D bill.

Charges would have been higher had councils not subsidised taxpayers by drawing £900 million from reserves. If these savings were not being spent to finance current expenditure the increase would have been 7 per cent, almost three times the rate of inflation.

This is the third consecutive year that councils have taken a record amount from savings. By next March they will have only £1.1 billion left. Any further use of reserves would leave local authorities without enough funds to meet emergencies.

The figures, compiled by the Local Government Chronicle, show that 270 out of 402 councils have budgeted to spend the maximum allowed under Government capping limits. Eight councils are trying to defy the cap, setting budgets a total of £29 million above the limit.

There are only 12 councils with budgets of £3 million or more below their cap. They include Westminster, which has taken over as cheapest council from Wandsworth, where the 26 per cent increase is the highest anywhere. The Band D rate in Westminster is

£275, compared with £962 in Liverpool, the most expensive authority.

Seven of the 12 lowest spending councils are Tory controlled, including Westminster, which has budgeted £29 million below its cap, and Huntingdon, John Major's constituency, which is £35 million below. The only Labour controlled council is Enfield, almost £12 million below. Lambeth, a hung council, has agreed a budget £8.8 million below its cap.

The figures allow both major parties to claim in the election campaign that their councils are cheapest. The average tax bill in all bands in Labour councils is £490, compared with £525 in Tory councils and £561 in Liberal Democrat councils. However the average Band D property, which is used as the benchmark for tax levels, costs £566 in Tory council areas, £599 in Liberal Democrat areas and £641 in Labour areas.

Pop Art buyer will kiss £2m goodbye

A PAINTING by the American Pop artist Roy Lichtenstein is expected to be sold for up to \$3 million (£2 million) in New York on May 3, according to Christie's. "Lichtenstein's Kiss II is a magnificent example of the artist's comic-book style," the auction house said. There is renewed interest in the 1960s Pop Art movement, which drew on advertising and cartoons. Andy Warhol's *Shot Red Marilyn* was sold in New York last year for \$3.6 million.



A New York auction for *Kiss II*, the comic-book masterpiece by Roy Lichtenstein

Museum butterflies may fly again

By NIGEL HAWKES, SCIENCE EDITOR

BUTTERFLIES impaled on pins in museums are to lend their genes to a project for introducing their European cousins here.

The Large Copper, extinct in Britain since 1860, and the Chequered Skipper, last seen in 1975, are to be brought back from The Netherlands and France in a project backed by English Nature and Butterfly Conservation. Dr Andrew Pullin of Keele University plans to extract DNA from the specimens and to compare it with that of the European butterflies. The aim is to find how close the extinct

British populations were to their European counterparts and perhaps to gain hints about the kind of habitat they will need.

Dr David Sheppard, an ecologist from English Nature, hopes that DNA analysis will show whether British specimens from different sites were closely related or distinct. "For the butterflies to survive, we have to design the right habitat," he said. "The genetic information may tell us whether the old populations were happy in a small, isolated area, or whether they need corridors linking them to other populations." Dr Pullin said that the study should reveal new information

about genetic diversity and may indicate which foreign species are the closest match to the extinct British butterflies and likeliest to survive here.

He is not sure how easy it will be to extract DNA from specimens. The Chequered Skipper should be easier because the specimens are not so old but it is not clear how much DNA will have survived in Large Coppers, which have been in museum cases for well over a century.

In Europe, cages will be placed over butterflies on plants and their eggs collected for transporting to Britain, possibly this summer.

Brocket in court on £4.5m car charge

By KATHRYN KNIGHT

LORD Brocket, one of Britain's most prominent classic car collectors, appeared in court yesterday charged with conspiracy in an alleged £4.5 million insurance swindle.

His appearance, with four others, relates to an insurance claim after an alleged break-in three years ago at his home on the Brocket Hall estate in Lemsford, Hertfordshire. Four Italian sports cars and engines were reported stolen. Lord Brocket, a friend of the Prince of Wales, was charged under his full name, Charles Ronald George Nall-Cain, at St Albans Magistrates' Court.

It was alleged that between March 1991 and September of last year he conspired to defraud the General Accident Fire and Life Assurance Corporation, Paul Barnes and others of Lloyds of London by claiming there had been a burglary at his estate in which three Ferraris, a Maserati and car accessories worth together £4.5 million had been stolen. The four were remanded on bail until May 23.

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Mother's Day treats in store

By THOMAS THORNTON

WITH Mothering Sunday imminent, there are good prices for luxury items that would make excellent gifts. Sainsbury's JS champagne is down £1.50 to £10.95, while Sainsbury's has Terry's Chocolate Orange Cream Liqueur at £7.89 for 70cl. Asda has a Mother's Day bouquet for £4.99, and at Sainsbury's large bouquets are reduced £3 to £2.99.

Turning to bargain necessities, Sainsbury's has pork leg at £1.29 a lb; at Asda it is £1.49 a lb. Sainsbury's Lincolnshire sausages 95p a lb. Tesco has Sirloin steak at £3.98 a lb, and eight skinless chicken breast fillets at £2.79 a lb. Iceland's star buy is leg of lamb at £1.29 a lb. Asda has skinless hoki at 99p a lb, and Somerfield breaded formed cod are £1.39 for 284g. Native oysters are widely available.

There are bargains among fruit and vegetables to be found. Asda courgettes are 99p a lb, and grapefruit 18p each. English cabbages, mushrooms and leeks are also reasonably priced.

Other advertised best buys: Asda: Uncle Ben's curry sauces 89p a jar. Macedonian country red wine 1.99 a bottle. Budgens: Mr Kipling's Bramley apple pies 69p (6-pack). Birds Eye crunchy garlic chicken (2-pack) £1.19. Co-op: 4 Linda McCartney deep country pies £1.67. Harrods: Fresh shark and whole salmon both £5.50 a lb.

WEEKEND SHOPPING

Iceland: Breaded scallop (400g) £2.29. Marks & Spencer: Italian pasta sauce (500g) £1.09. Sainsbury's: I Can't Believe It's Not Butter £1.49 a kg. Sainsbury's: JS Cornflakes (750g) 89p. JS Cotes du Luberon £2.49. Somerfield/Gateway: Kiwi fruit (punnet) 69p. Onion bhajis (6) 79p. Tesco: water thin smoked ham 57p a 4 lb. Waitrose: Round lettuce 26p; stuffed green olives (340g) 79p.

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Labour struggles to reassure the middle classes

BY PETER RIDDELL

THE new Labour leadership has failed so far to change the belief of middle-class people that in government the party would increase income tax and would not improve living standards.

The latest MORI poll for The Times, undertaken last weekend, shows how much Labour has to do to reassure the public about its policies despite the party's high poll

ratings and the positive impact which Tony Blair has made as leader.

Labour retains a big lead over the Tories, of 57 against 25 per cent, and Mr Blair's personal rating has risen, particularly among Labour supporters, who approve of his performance as Labour leader by a seven-to-one margin.

The latest poll shows that

two-thirds of the public believe that a Labour Government would increase income tax, the same level as when Mr Blair was elected last July and slightly higher than six years ago when Labour was seeking to modernise its approach under Neil Kinnock.

The net balance of those who believe that Labour would, rather than would not, increase income tax is plus 51 points, but it is plus 62 points among the middle-class groups which Mr Blair is trying to win over. That is an area of vulnerability which the Tories will seek to exploit. It will reinforce the allegations made by Gordon Brown, the Shadow Chancellor, to shed Labour's "high tax and spend" image.

People believe that Labour would improve welfare state services, by a net balance of 51 points generally and a net 58 points among working-class people.

The net balance believing that Labour will, rather than will not, help to improve their standard of living is marginally negative overall. But there is a sharp difference between the middle classes, where the balance is minus 23 points, and the working classes, where it is plus 16 points. This implies that people believe that a Labour Government would redistribute resources in favour of the working classes.

The middle classes are also more sceptical about whether



Labour in office would keep its promises, a net minus 21 points against plus 10 points among the working classes.

Overall, the public remains doubtful about whether Labour would be able to keep inflation down (a net minus 20 points) and fewer than in the past believe that it would reduce unemployment (a net plus 11 points against plus 28 points in 1989). This links with Mr Blair's reluctance to commit the party to a specific goal of full employment.

The most positive points for Mr Blair are that there is a large, and rising, net balance believing that Labour would give a strong voice for Britain in Europe, plus 35 points, against plus 29 points last July. Moreover, fewer people believe that a Labour Government would be controlled by the trade unions, a net balance

of minus 19 points against minus 10 points last July.

The latest questions on party image show that, since Mr Blair became leader last July, Labour has improved its ratings on measures such as understanding the problems facing Britain and having a good team of leaders. Fewer people regard the party as divided than at any time in more than a decade.

□ MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,999 adults at 149 ward sampling points across Britain. Interviews were conducted face to face on March 17 to 20. Data were weighted to match the profile of the population. Voting intention figures exclude those who say they would not vote (10 per cent), are undecided (9 per cent) or refuse to name a party (2 per cent).

Poll shows increase in concern for NHS

PUBLIC concern about the health service is at its highest level for three years, according to the MORI poll.

The number of people mentioning the NHS as among the most important issues facing Britain today has risen from 36 to 43 per cent over the past month. This is the highest figure since February 1992, shortly before the last general election.

By contrast, the number of mentions of unemployment has declined and, at 51 per cent, is the lowest since the end of 1991.

The public remains cautious, however, about the

economic outlook. The economic optimism index, measuring the balance between those who think the general economic condition of the country will improve rather than get worse over the next 12 months, has recovered since the end of February from the exceptionally low level of minus 18 months ago. But this is otherwise the lowest rating since February 1993.

Public concern remains high not only about the health service but also about education, where the current level of mentions, at 25 per cent, is around the highest for three years.

Tories seen as divided party

BY PETER RIDDELL

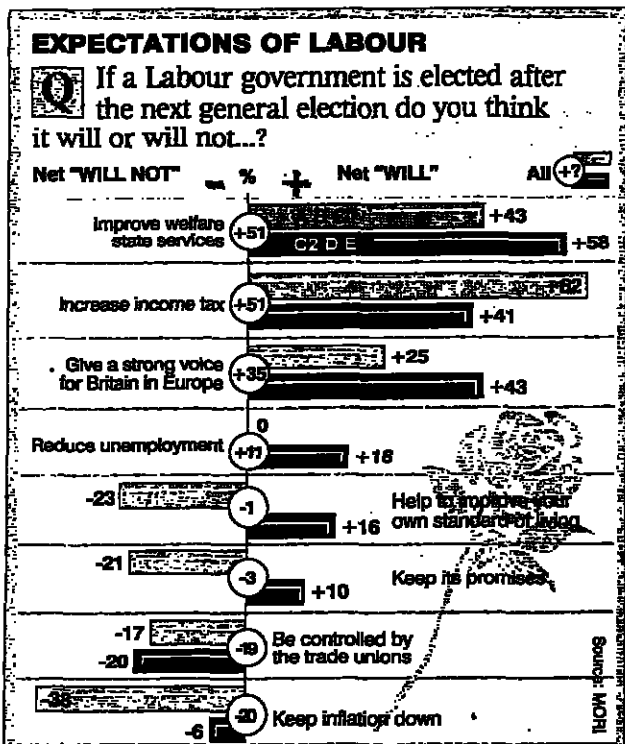
THE Tories are suffering in the polls more because of the party's failures and divisions than because of John Major's performance.

The latest MORI poll for The Times contains the series of questions asked twice a year about party images. This shows how the Tories are now regarded as divided and out of touch and having little understanding of the problems facing Britain. On all these aspects, the Tories are much worse placed than Labour. The Tories' ratings have fallen sharply since the 1992 election.

Nearly half the public believes that the Tories are divided, three times as many as think Labour is. This is a reversal of the pre-1992 position. More than two-fifths of even the reduced band of Tory supporters believe that their own party is divided.

About the only favourable finding for the Tories is that fewer people regard the party as extreme or too dominated by its leader than during the Thatcher years.

The poll also shows how public disapproval with the way the Government is running the country is greater than its disapproval of Mr Major's record as Prime Minister. The balance of those satisfied less dissatisfied with the Government is minus 72 points, while for Mr Major it is minus 48 points. The middle classes disapprove of the Government's record by a net seven to one, but disapprove of Mr Major's performance by a net two to one.



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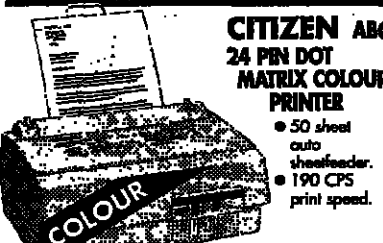
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Criticism of public services rising

BY NIGEL WILLIAMSON

THE number of complaints about bad service from government departments has risen to a record 1,332 — up more than a third on the previous year.

The parliamentary ombudsman's annual report, published today, shows that the Department of Social Security had the most complaints with 526, many of which were about the Child Support Agency.

William Reid, the ombudsman, said the huge rise in complaints had led to a 12-week increase in the average time spent on investigations, taking it to 70 weeks 4 days. Other departments that had large numbers of complaints were the Inland Revenue (134), Environment (74), Home Office (54), Legal Aid Board (53), Transport (48), Trade and Industry (39), and Lord Chancellor's Department (39).

Of the 226 investigations completed, the ombudsman found that in 200 cases the complaint was "wholly or partly justified". In 151 cases he arranged either a financial remedy or a change in departmental procedure.

His report contained a catalogue of unsatisfactory behaviour by public servants. Many complaints were received about retirement pension claims and, for the first time, one about personal pensions. The Contributions Agency had incorrectly recovered contributions previously paid into a man's pension plan. They were then slow to repay them and refused to compensate him for loss of profits. They finally agreed an ex-gratia payment of £409.05.

Another "deeply disturbing" case involved a woman and her neighbour, a DSS employee. The woman said that the DSS had responded inadequately to her complaint that her employee had abused her official position by falsely accusing her of fraudulently claiming income support. The ombudsman said the local investigation had been inadequate, with the priority being to protect the employee. The DSS subsequently apologised and gave the complainant an ex-gratia payment of £200.

□ **Parliamentary Commissioner for Administration**, annual report for 1994 (HMSO: £10.70)

IN PARLIAMENT

YESTERDAY in the Commons: questions to agriculture ministers and the Prime Minister; Jobseekers Bill, remaining stages; debate on the Civil Service; in the Lords: Crown Agents Bill, committee stage; debate on EU report on sugar regime reform.

TODAY in the Commons: from 9.30am, backbench debates starting with the Activity Centres (Young Persons' Safety) Bill, report, followed by the Transport of Animals for Slaughter Bill. The House of Lords is not sitting.

Minister faces inquiry over failure to answer questions

BY JAMES LANDALE, POLITICAL REPORTER

A MINISTER was referred to the parliamentary ombudsman yesterday for failing to answer an MP's question.

Under a new procedure, two Labour MPs have asked the ombudsman to investigate why Richard Needham, the Export and Trade Minister, refused to answer a written parliamentary question earlier this year.

There is growing anger among MPs who accuse ministers of sidestepping some questions by claiming that the inquiry would cost too much or the information would be too difficult to obtain.

The question, tabled by Stephen Byers, Labour MP for Wallasey, concerned the council that advises the Government on export credit guarantees. In the past three years the Government has sought to encourage exports by using almost £10 billion of public money to underwrite British firms' contracts with risky foreign companies.

Members of the Export Guarantees Advisory Council include representatives of leading banks, such as Nat West, Kleinwort Benson and Rothschilds, and big construction firms such as the Bovis Construction Group, Balfour Beatty and the General Electric Company. Mr Byers asked



Needham: accused by two Labour MPs

how many of these companies, which he named in full, had been awarded contracts supported by export guarantees.

On January 31, Mr Needham replied: "It has been the policy of successive Governments not to disclose information about commercial relations between the Export Credits Guarantee Department and individual companies unless the relevant parties have agreed to this."

Within a few days, Mr Byers tabled a second question, this time asking only how many contracts with export guarantees had been awarded

to these companies. Although an answer to this question would be less likely to breach commercial confidentiality, Mr Needham simply referred him back to the original reply.

William Reid, the Parliamentary Commissioner, Administration, or ombudsman, has indicated that he might be prepared to break new ground by considering MPs' complaints about ministers' refusal to answer questions. The ombudsman usually investigates complaints from the public about government departments. Although he has no power over what is said in Parliament, he could consider a minister's refusal to answer a written question as a breach of the new code of practice on freedom of information.

Mr Byers said that both he and Alan Milburn, the Labour MP for Darlington, were finding it increasingly difficult to get answers to written questions. He said that since November ministers had used cost or logistical reasons to avoid 668 questions.

"This Government is hiding behind a cloak of secrecy," he said. "We intend to use any mechanism available to make the Government answerable to the British public."

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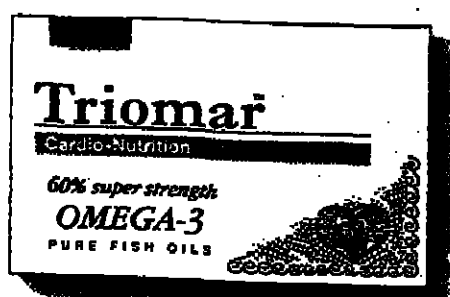
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Vicar campaigns to replace Pugin window 'redolent of Mr Blobby'

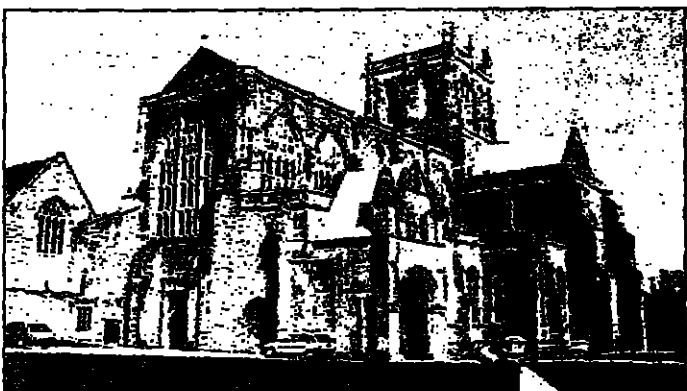
BY RUTH GLEDHILL
RELIGION CORRESPONDENT

THE vicar of one of the country's oldest and most beautiful abbey churches is to face a church court over proposals to replace the historic stained glass in its west window with a modern design.

The Victorian Society, which is contesting the plans, says the window at 15th-century Sherborne Abbey in Dorset, by the 19th-century architect Augustus Pugin, is a "fine work of art" and that it must stay. But the Rev Eric Woods, Vicar of Sherborne Abbey, says the bright stained glass and faded paint in the window led one schoolboy visitor to say that the 29 Old Testament prophets and patriarchs looked like Mr Blobby.

The parochial church council of Sherborne Abbey, which disputes that the window is by Pugin, wants to replace it with a £170,000 window depicting the Incarnation by John Hayward, a contemporary artist who has windows in St Mary-le-Bow Church in the City of London and in Dunstable Priory.

Mr Woods, a graduate of Magdalen College, Oxford, said: "The great mass of opinion in Sherborne is that this existing



Sherborne Abbey and the Rev Eric Woods: the stained glass was "really quite vulgar"

window is not worth the very expensive cost of restoration because it does not have a message. It does not speak to anyone — except to small boys about Mr Blobby."

He said the bright blue and red colours in the painted robes of the prophets and kings remained, but the detail painted on to the stained glass had faded. "We have these very brilliant blobs of colour on the garments, and featureless pink faces. I think that is why a small child described it to me as Mr Blobby," he said. "At the time I was not really aware of

who Mr Blobby was, that not being a staple of my television diet. It was a child's perception."

Mr Woods said the window was "really quite vulgar". The window's red and blue discs, intended originally to be stars, were compared at the time to railway signals and were now described by local people as traffic lights. He added: "It is a very commonplace window in which Pugin had some hand but, unlike the south window, it is not a Pugin masterpiece."

However, Dr William Filmer-Sankney, director of the Victorian



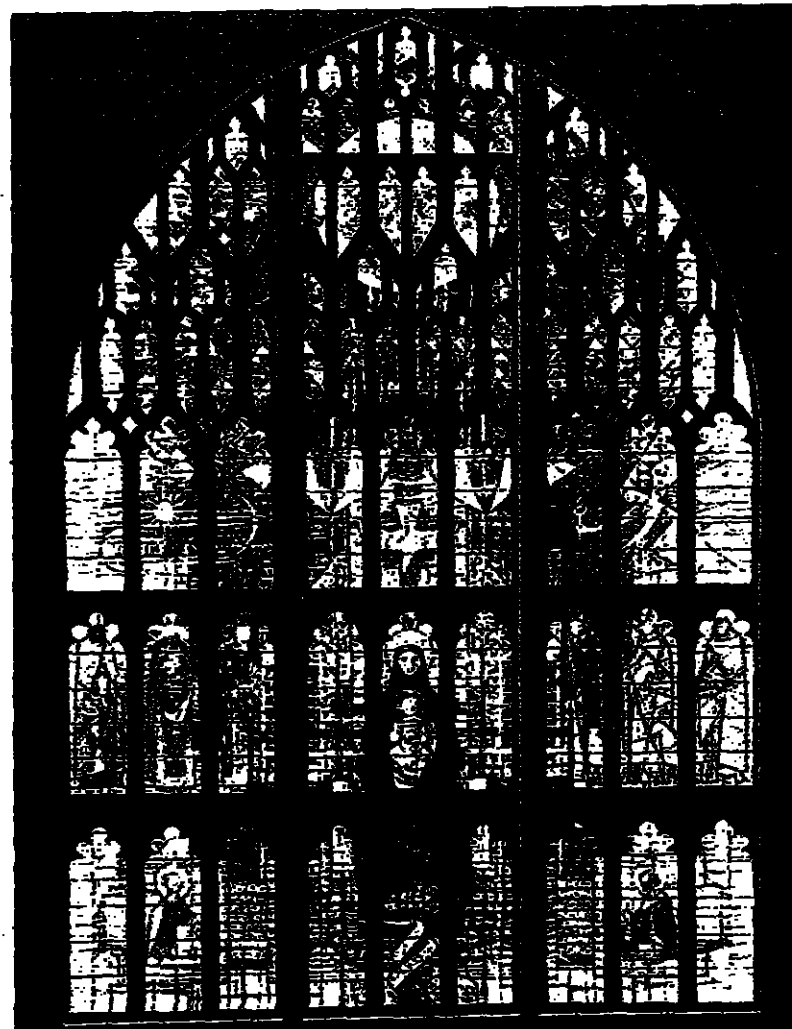
personally do not see any connection between an over-inflated, bright pink plastic lump and the figures in the window. Bright pink would have made Pugin sick. There is no link between Mr Blobby and Pugin's window."

Judge John Ellison, the chancellor of Salisbury diocese, will preside at the consistory hearing, which will be open to the public. The court will sit in the abbey itself, which is dedicated to St Mary the Virgin, and within sight of the disputed window, which dates from 1851.

The Victorian Society will argue that Sherborne has an important collection of 19th-century stained glass windows, and to remove any one would reduce the significance of those remaining.

Sherborne Abbey was founded in 705 as the cathedral of Wessex by St Aldhelm, first Bishop of Sherborne and the first Anglo-Saxon to become a distinguished scholar and Latin poet. In 998 it became a Benedictine Abbey, but in 1075 the see was transferred to Old Sarum. Since the Reformation the abbey has been the parish church of Sherborne, although it is still often referred to as the cathedral of Dorset. Its 15th-century fan vaulting is the earliest work of its kind.

Dr Filmer-Sankney added: "I



The window that the Victorian Society says can easily be restored

Birthrate rises by a half for women over 40

BY JEREMY LAURANCE, HEALTH SERVICES CORRESPONDENT

BIRTHS to women over 40 have risen by half in ten years as increasing numbers seize their last chance of motherhood, a new report shows.

Rising divorce and the impact of careers is making many women delay starting a family until their late thirties or early forties while the birth rate among those in their twenties is declining. Among fortysomethings, the sharpest increase has been in births to unmarried women, up nearly threefold between 1983 and 1993 compared with a rise of a third among married women.

Four in ten births to unmarried women over 40 had fathers in their thirties. The over-40s is the only age group of women in which the unmarried are more likely to have babies than the married. Among married women the sharpest increases have been in births of first and second children, with even greater increases in births among women who have remarried.

Dr Kathleen Kiernan, a specialist in family issues at the London School of Economics, said: "These women are highly educated professionals who remain childless well into their thirties, building up their careers. What we don't know

is whether they are delaying so long by choice. After the age of 35 it takes longer to conceive and the risk of miscarriage is greater. It could be that having decided to delay and then taking longer to conceive they are being shunted past 40."

Among women who have turned to parenting in their forties are the actress Patricia Hodge, 47, who had two children, now aged three and six, after 12 years of trying, and Felicity Kendal who had her second baby at the age of 41, 16 years after her first, after her first marriage ended.

The report in *Population Trends*, published by the Office of Population Censuses and Surveys, shows there were 10,525 births to women over 40 in 1993 compared with 6,872 in 1983, a rise of 53 per cent. The actual rise in the birth rate, after allowing for the rise in women in the age group following the post-war baby boom, was one third.

Despite increases over the last decade, the birthrate among the over-40s is only half that in the early Sixties, when large families were the norm. Most births were to women building their families while a larger proportion in the last decade have been to women starting their families.

Studies show that older women have always been more likely to have children outside marriage. Although male partners tend to be older than female partners in first marriages, the women are as likely to be older in second or later unions.

Dr Kiernan said there was a trend across the western world towards having children, associated with the rise in women going into higher education. A second report in *Population Trends* shows that the proportion of women with a degree in Britain has risen fourfold since 1971 but has only doubled among men.



Hodge, left, and Kendal

Survey shows it's a woman's world

BY LUCY BERRINGTON

YOUNG women are facing the future with more confidence and less conformity than their male peers, says a survey published yesterday.

Women aged 15 to 24, inspired by better job opportunities and educational success, were more likely than young men of the same age to want to travel and see the world before launching their careers, according to *Youth Lifestyles 1995*. Young men appeared more alarmed than women by the prospect of life without a steady relationship, while women were more concerned with developing platonic friendships.

Women in their late teens are also becoming less conformist, with four in ten saying they reject their parents' lifestyles, the report by Mintel International, a market and consumer research company, said. Less than 30 per cent of their male peers took a similar stance.

The research, based on 894 people aged 15 to 24 surveyed

last year, also identified a growing sense of rebellion. Since the last study, in 1992, 10 per cent fewer young women (53 per cent) wanted to be judged sensible and responsible. The proportion of men who saw themselves as outgoing and extrovert fell by 7 per cent to just over a quarter.

The proportion of young people who considered themselves wild and unpredictable rose from 12 to 15 per cent. Angela Hughes, Mintel's consumer research manager, said: "Young people value creativity and originality more now."

The rejection of "grown-up" attitudes was most marked among people from middle class backgrounds. While young people in the higher socio-economic groups wanted to appear intelligent, thoughtful and creative, their working class peers put the greatest value on being sensible and caring.

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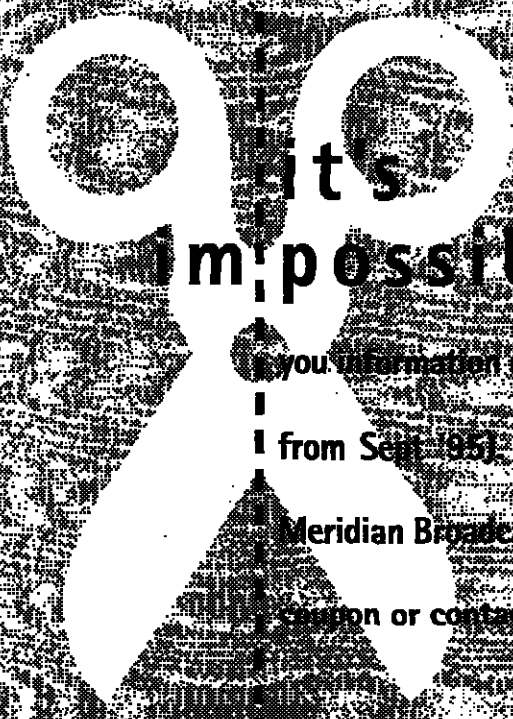
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Cultists defy Japan's modern image of discipline and order



Asahara: claims the world will end in 1997

THE poison gas attack on Tokyo's subway system is a disturbing symptom of the reality behind the facade that Japan presents to the rest of the world.

To understand Japan, one must forget the French Revolution. While Europe was awakening to the Enlightenment, Japan was in self-imposed seclusion. By the time it re-established contact with the modern world in the 1850s, rationalism, science, democracy and the rights of man were already part of Western culture. But not in Japan.

Even now, 150 years later, the Japanese attitude to basic principles of Western culture, such as democracy, human rights, and individual freedom, is confused and ambivalent. In Japan, traditional values of loyalty, endurance and self-sacrifice, and social pressure on the individual to conform,

Japan gives the impression of being an advanced superstate whose citizens live in harmony. Yet it has had a long history of anti-orthodox cults and popular rebellions, Peregrine Hodson writes

have led to a well-regimented population — and a successful economy. But increasingly these values are being questioned by the Japanese. Self-sacrifice for the good of the group — Honda or otherwise — when it leads to *karoshi*, death from overwork, seems less an honourable exit and more a foolish waste of life.

Japan's image, in the eyes of many, is none the less of a monolithic, technologically advanced superstate, whose disciplined and obedient citizens live in

harmony with each other. Yet it has had a long history of anti-orthodox cults and popular rebellions: from the warrior monks of Kyoto and the millenarianism of Jodo Buddhism to the peasant uprisings in the 19th century, the long-running battle of farmers and students against Narita airport, and the terrorism of the Japanese Red Army faction.

The popular, and false, image of Japan is largely the result of myths that the Japanese have been encouraged to believe, such as their "uniqueness" and their racial and

cultural "homogeneity". In the past, these myths have been used by politicians to bind the country together, during the bad old days of Japanese imperialism in Asia, and during the uncertainties of the post-war era. Now these myths may be unravelling.

Better informed and more widely travelled than their parents, many younger Japanese are disenchanted with their politicians. The Liberal Democratic Party's long-held monopoly of power has created a political sub-culture of people who feel their interests have been ignored.

As the Liberals' influence wanes, groups from this sub-culture will become more visible. Meanwhile, the greying of Japan's population will increase the frustrations of a generation that feels ignored by government, or unrepresented.

Typically, most will conceal their frustrations and conform, waiting for their turn to come.

But some, like the members of the Aum Shinrikyo sect, are impatient and upheavals within the established order are a stimulus for movements against the state. Less time gives greater urgency. According to the cult's leader, Shoko Asahara, the world ends in 1997.

In Japan, where the group is sovereign, boundaries between cults, sects and political parties can be elusive. At times, as in the pre-war cults of state Shinto and the worship of the emperor, religion and politics have come together. With the demise of Marxism, a traditional focus for Japanese radicalism and revolt has disappeared. Inevitably, the disaffected will find another focus for their frustration. Whether or not there is a connection between the bizarre followers of Aum, and the poison gas attack on the Tokyo subway system, both are symptomatic of an aspect of Japan that many, including Japanese politicians, have preferred to ignore. The people of Japan and the ruling parties are out of touch with each other.

Almost 50 years after the constitution imposed on their country by the victorious Americans, the Japanese have come to realise that democracy is not an industrial process to be copied and applied. They recognise the need for more effective democracy. But at government level, the impetus for change is weak, and the seeming inertia of Japan's politicians compounds the risk of radical movements, capable of further acts of terrorism like the horrifying attack on Tokyo's commuters.

Sect leader eludes police as raids uncover lethal haul

FROM GWEN ROBINSON IN TOKYO AND OUR FOREIGN STAFF

JAPAN last night intensified the search for Shoko Asahara, the cult leader wanted for questioning after the fatal gas attacks on the Tokyo subway on Monday, as police found enough chemicals to kill millions in a warehouse belonging to the sect.

The whereabouts of Shoko Asahara, founder of Aum Shinrikyo (Supreme Truth) were unknown. Mr Asahara was thought to have been at his sect's main facility in central Japan until Tuesday, just hours before 2,500 policemen launched dawn raids around the country on 25 premises belonging to his sect. Yesterday, however, investigators were unable to locate the cult leader. Press reports speculated that he had fled the country or had gone into hiding in Japan.

The first official link between Mr Asahara's sect and the gas attack which killed ten and made more than 5,000 people ill, came after police teams discovered large stores of toxic chemicals in raids on the sect's main facilities. Yesterday, police said they had seized sodium fluoride, phosphorus trichloride and isopropyl alcohol — all three main

ingredients which experts said are "the chemical precursors" needed to make the deadly sarin gas that overwhelmed Tokyo commuters.

About 1,100 police, clad in chemical-proof clothing and gas masks, yesterday concentrated their search on the sect's two largest premises, which lie at the foot of Mount Fuji in central Japan.

Sect members claimed all the substances seized by police from their premises were for use in manufacturing activities carried out in workshops owned by the sect, including a computer assembly workshop and a centre for welding and machining. Police insisted, however, that the quantities and types of chemicals indicated production of sarin.

Former followers of the apocalyptic cult painted a chilling picture of conditions in its compounds and communities: filthy, bizarre and cruel. Inside the group's commune near Kamikishiki, 68 miles west of Tokyo, some sect members were found dressed in baggy pyjama-like suits, smeared with dirt and wandering aimlessly about.

The sensational press coverage of the unfolding saga of

the gas attack and the growing mystery surrounding Mr Asahara's sect and its motives have spawned a sense of unease among Japanese. Mr Asahara and his followers have denied involvement in the attack and have rejected other allegations of kidnapping, abuse of members and an earlier nerve gas attack on residents in the city of Matsumoto, near the sect's Mount Fuji compound.

Many people who are watching daily live coverage of police raids on the sect say they do not believe the denials, and fear what Mr Asahara and his group may do next.

The anxieties deepened yesterday, after news of an ominous message from Mr Asahara, which was broadcast from a radio station which the sect owns in Russia. In the broadcast, which was relayed by a Japanese radio station, Mr Asahara urged his followers to help him in his "time of need" and to prepare themselves for death.

"Disciples, the time to awaken and help me is upon you. I am waiting for you to help me with the salvation plan — let us carry out the plan and greet death without regrets."



Japanese police wearing chemical warfare suits seize bags of sodium fluoride from the Aum Shinrikyo religious sect at a village near Mount Fuji yesterday (Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor, writes). During a second day of raids on the village warehouse they discovered

Seized chemicals could have killed millions

enough chemicals to kill millions if they had been made into sarin nerve gas and distributed effectively. The first day's raids produced large numbers of drums of acetonitrile, a solvent be-

lieved to have been used to dilute the nerve gas. Yesterday, police said they had seized sodium fluoride, phosphorus trichloride and isopropyl alcohol, all three of which are "the chemi-

cal precursors you would need to make sarin," according to Professor Alastair Hay of Leeds University, who is an expert on chemical weapons. In addition, police said they had found large amounts of

other dangerous chemicals such as cyanide, packed in paper sacks, some of which had been torn open. The quantity of chemicals found is remarkable, and suggests that the production of sarin at the Kamikishiki village complex could have been on a near-industrial scale.

US rebuilds navy ties with China

FROM JAMES PRINGLE IN PEKING

A US missile cruiser has begun a visit to China for the first time since the violent suppression of pro-democracy demonstrations in Tiananmen Square in June 1989, and a brief but tense Sino-American confrontation in the Yellow Sea late last year.

The USS *Bunker Hill* steamed into the north China port of Qingdao on Wednesday as Chinese and American military hands played. "There is nothing political about the visit," Rear Admiral Bernard Smith said in Qingdao yesterday. "It is simply a visit for friendship."

Chinese sailors in full dress regalia lined the decks of the frigate *Dan Dong 545* and the submarine *Chang Chen 359*, two of China's most advanced naval vessels, to salute the *Bunker Hill*.

Admiral Smith said that a key aim of the visit was to gain a better understanding of the Chinese Navy. He added that it would be inappropriate to comment on China's naval build-up during the goodwill trip, which ends tomorrow.

There have been no port visits by the US Navy since the Tiananmen Square crackdown, when military ties were cut. But relations between the US military and the People's Liberation Army have begun to improve.

Mrs Clinton faces paradox of sexual politics in Asia

FROM CHRISTOPHER THOMAS IN DELHI

HILLARY CLINTON today begins a two-week tour of South Asia, where three women rule nearly 300 million people. Her first stop is Pakistan, which jails women who are raped. She will travel to Bangladesh, whose clergymen publicly flog women for illegal sexual intercourse; and she will visit Sri Lanka, a country of political widows.

Apart from these three countries, she will visit Nepal, one of the few countries in the world where women die younger than men because of overwork and malnutrition. She will also visit India, where she will hear about the fantastic excesses of the country's leading female politician, Jayalalitha, who is currently portraying herself as the Virgin Mary to 80 million Tamils under her rule.

It is a South Asian paradox that some of the worst atrocities against women happen under the unprotesting leadership of females. Their position in male-dominated societies is anomalous, precarious and, in the eyes of men, dubious. No woman politician dares actively to promote female equality.

Mrs Clinton announced that in each country she would meet women representatives of government. "Increasingly, the leadership of women plays an important role in shaping practical and effective re-

sponses to the global concerns of poverty, lack of education and employment opportunities, inadequate housing and poor healthcare."

That statement carefully skirted the question of women's rights and the failure of South Asia's woman President and two women Prime Ministers to do anything to advance them. Bangladeshi women have made gains in the past decade, thanks to voluntary workers and non-governmental aid agencies, but their position remains dire.

Benazir Bhutto, the Pakistani Prime Minister, would face a backlash from the clergy if she rallied against



Hillary Clinton: skirted cause of women's rights

some of the more conspicuous abuses against women. Many female prisoners are held under Islamic laws that criminalise adultery and fornication. Four male witnesses must testify that there was penetration before a woman can prove rape. Unable to establish their case, raped women often end up in jail for fornication. Human rights groups say as many as 70 per cent of female prisoners in police stations are sexually abused by policemen.

Begum Khalida Zia, Prime Minister of Bangladesh, is also constrained in helping women. She faces a determined grassroots clergy that increasingly assumes judicial powers, including the public flogging of rural women for having sexual intercourse outside marriage. Mrs Zia, fearful of the clergy, did not protest loudly about the harassment of Taslima Nasreen, the Bengali writer forced to flee the country by Islamic extremists who did not like her liberated lifestyle or explicit writings.

President Bandaranaike Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka is one of the country's dozens of political widows, four of whom contested last summer's general election. At no point in the campaign did any of them raise the issue of women's rights.

India divided by film of forbidden love

BY CHRISTOPHER THOMAS

HINDUS and Muslims are flocking to see *Bombay*, a Bollywood blockbuster that has been banned in some cities for taking too frank a look at religious strife and depicting the unthinkable: a Hindu and a Muslim falling in love and running away.

The Telugu-language version has been banned in the southern city of Hyderabad, where religious tension has high, after Islamic leaders complained that the film's heroine does not wear a *burqa* (veil). Muslim youths ransacked a cinema during one late-night showing. Another cinema received a bomb threat. *Bombay* delayed release of the film

demanding several cuts. It is set against the 1992 destruction of the Babri mosque by Hindu extremists in the northern holy city of Ayodhya, and subsequent anti-Muslim riots in Bombay in which at least 600 people died.

A leading character in the film bears a striking likeness to Bal Thackeray, the Hindu fanatic whose Shiv Sena organisation came to power in Bombay last week after state elections in Maharashtra. His group was primarily responsible for the riots of December 1992 and January 1993.

"I am not preventing release of the film," Mr Thackeray said. "But if my boys feel I have been misrepresented or insulted in the film, they will burn down the theatres." His "boys" are Shiv Sena

thugs called *sainiks*, estimated to number 40,000.

Bombay was made by Mani Ratnam, who made an earlier controversial film about Kashmir, in which a newly-wed woman fought for the release of her husband from Muslim militants.

Some cities in the southern state of Tamil Nadu have banned Tamil-language versions of the film outright.

"People know that Hindus and Muslims do fall in love, but it is not something that is talked about," says Anil Saree, a leading commentator on the Indian film industry. "*Bombay* is one of the first films to show that people fall in love across the religious divide. It will have a tremendous sociological impact."

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Russians try to halt Bosnia's slide back into war

By Eve-Anne Prentice
DIPLOMATIC
CORRESPONDENT

RUSSIA has presented a new peace plan for the former Yugoslavia to the American Secretary of State, in yet another attempt to find a diplomatic solution before Bosnia slides back to full-scale war this spring.

The plan, presented by Andrei Kozyrev, the Russian Foreign Minister, during his meeting with Mr Christopher in Geneva, comes as Muslim-led Bosnian Government forces are leading a strong offensive against Serb troops in the north-east of the republic, which has effectively ended a winter ceasefire.

Under the Russian plan, Serb-led Yugoslavia would recognise Bosnia and Croatia, in return for the simultaneous lifting of United Nations sanctions. So far, the international community has insisted that the recognition must come first.

The five-nation Contact Group — Britain, France, Germany, Russia and the United States — will meet soon to discuss how to move the peace process forward. Mr Kozyrev said, adding that the new plan was not intended to replace current peace proposals. "We want the Contact Group to remain united."

The new peace plan was reportedly worked out by President Milosevic of Serbia and Mr Kozyrev, but was met with little enthusiasm by Western diplomats in Geneva yesterday. In America, *The Washington Times* reported that it had a copy of the proposal and cited a diplomat close to the US-Russian meetings in Geneva as saying the plan had "won the approval" of Bosnian Muslims, who are said to have sent an envoy to meet Serbian leaders in Belgrade.

Kozyrev warns of chill with US as Geneva talks fail

FROM RICHARD BEESTON IN MOSCOW

ANDREI KOZYREV, the Russian Foreign Minister, issued a warning yesterday that Moscow's relations with the West had entered a colder and more confrontational phase.

Speaking after seven hours of fruitless talks with Warren Christopher, the American Secretary of State, over two days in Geneva, which failed to make any headway on issues ranging from nuclear proliferation to the war in Chechnia, Mr Kozyrev remarked wryly: "I would say that indeed the honeymoon has come to an end."

He said that America and Russia had been able only to agree to disagree. His assessment appeared to cast a shadow over the forthcoming summit in Moscow when President Clinton joins President Yeltsin for the 50th anniversary commemorations of VE Day.

However, Mr Kozyrev insisted that the failure to resolve any of the points discussed did not mean that America and Russia would revert to their former enmity. He said the "sobering-up period" at the end of the post-communist honeymoon would not end in divorce.

Mr Kozyrev and Mr Christopher were attempting to find areas of common ground that could be used as a basis for resolving outstanding problems when Western leaders, including Mr Clinton, John Major, the Prime Minister, and President Mitterrand of France gather in Moscow on May 9.

For its part, Russia made it clear yesterday that it wanted full representation at the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations meeting in Halifax, Canada, in June. Mr Christopher insisted that there would be "no substantial change" from last year, when Moscow's role was limited to participation in the G7's political talks.

Russia would also like a commitment to have a greater say on security issues in Europe and to stop moves by Nato to expand its membership to former Warsaw Pact nations in central Europe.

Again, Washington has underlined that Russia has no right of veto on the matter and that applications by Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic are likely to be accepted.

America wanted a commitment yesterday from Mr Kozyrev that Moscow would reconsider its \$1 billion (£632 million) contract to supply nuclear reactors to Iran, where several hundred Russian technicians are at work. The Russian Foreign Minister was adamant that the work would go ahead and that the deal complied fully with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Underlying the disagreements between the two former Cold War enemies is the lasting impact of the four-month conflict in Chechnia, which has dented President Yeltsin's credibility at home and abroad and put strains on his former allies in the West.

Mr Kozyrev said yesterday that the two sides could at least agree on preventing "un-

Wednesday, Russian forces also made crushing advances against the separatists, uprooting the rebel military command from Shali, claiming capture of another Chechen stronghold and sparking an exodus of tens of thousands.

After 24 hours of intensive pounding by Russian artillery, Chechen commanders abandoned their headquarters in Shali, the self-declared separatist capital, during the night. The area was shredded by shrapnel and littered with broken glass.

The town of Gudermes was also increasingly isolated and under attack. A local man said that residential areas had been shelled for three days, and that there were few signs of Chechen military resistance. Thousands of civilians fled the plains of southeastern Chechnia for the Caucasus, whose foothills begin six miles outside Shali, and as options ran out for the fighters who have resisted Russia's firepower for more than three months, they looked likely to do the same.

The rebels said they would take the fight to the mountains, where Russian columns would likely find it impossible to take control. "They think that by taking control of Shali, Argun and Gudermes the war will be ended," said Ibrahim Magamodov, a fighter based in the town of Kurchaloi. "But it will go to the mountains — it will just be starting."

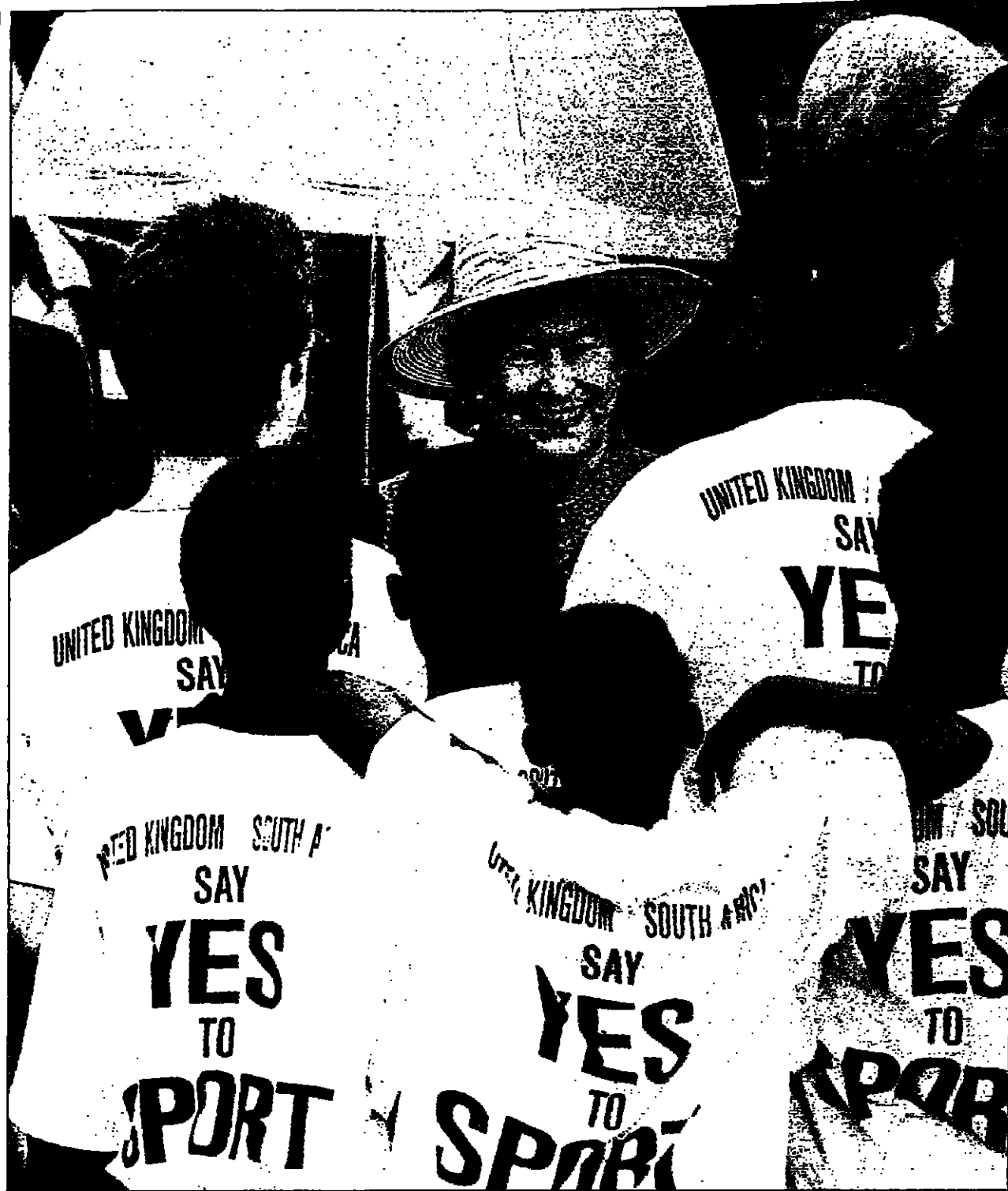
Aslambyek Bichyev, a militia commander in Kurchaloi, said that by last night 60,000 people had fled to the hills in the previous 24 hours. The Russians had launched their latest onslaught on Tuesday, using air and artillery attacks to force the Chechens back from positions east and south-east of Grozny. They surrounded Argun, caught Shali in a pincer movement and cut off Gudermes.

Western officials will be hoping that by the time world leaders assemble in Moscow in May to review the anniversary parade, there will not be any other Russian military "victories" to celebrate from the Chechen front lines.



Kozyrev: honeymoon has come to an end

faithfulness". Even as he spoke, Russia's troops were in action against Chechen separatist strongholds. General Anatoli Kulikov, the commander of Russian forces in the region, said that the town of Argun, ten miles east of the Chechen capital, Grozny, had fallen after a three-month siege, following an ultimatum given to the defenders on



The Queen chats to a group of young South African athletes at the Soweto sports centre she visited yesterday. The athletes are training under the sports initiative launched by John Major during his visit last year

Queen honours black war dead

FROM ALAN HAMILTON IN JOHANNESBURG

IN A vast and unlovely cemetery on the edge of Soweto, the Queen yesterday paid long-overdue tribute to the role of black South Africans in two world wars.

Accompanied by President Mandela, she unveiled a memorial to the 656 men of the South African Labour Contingent who died when their troopship, the *SS Mendi*, which was taking them to France, collided in fog with a merchant vessel 12 miles off St Catherine's Point on the Isle of Wight on February 21, 1917. Although there is a memorial to the tragedy at Southampton, the dead have not previously been honoured in their own country.

The calamity of the *Mendi* was made worse by the captain of the colliding vessel, the Royal Mail steamer *Darro*, who immediately reversed engines, disengaging the two hulls and allowing a torrent of seawater to flood into the *Mendi*. But the men died like heroes, displaying calmness, courage and sacrifice. Legends have grown around the sinking. The South African contingent are said to have

taken off their boots and stamped a dance of death on the deck. A Pondo chief, bobbing in the water, is said to have called out to his commanding officer: "There is nothing the matter yet."

Among the ex-servicemen who campaigned for a memorial in Soweto is Frank Sewale, a veteran of the 8th

schools. His breast a-glitter with campaign medals, including two Africa Stars, he added: "I do not think Britain was grateful to us; if they had been they would have built this memorial. But I am exhilarated that we now have it."

The memorial, intended eventually to be the centrepiece of a garden of remembrance, is a simple brick structure with 15 granite panels listing the names of the dead. It was largely funded by Matthews Mafane, a Johannesburg television producer, who contributed 250,000 rand (£50,000) after becoming fascinated by the *Mendi* story.

In a light drizzle, the Queen stepped forward with Mr Mandela to unveil the memorial as a military band played *Abide With Me*. Elderly black veterans stood proudly to attention. A crowd of several thousand looked on, many of them perched in trees for a better view.

Martin Woodward, co-writer of the Bembidge lifeboat on the Isle of Wight, whose accidental discovery of the wreck of the *Mendi* in the 1980s reawakened interest in

the story, said at his home yesterday: "It struck me that, had it been a company of white men who drowned, the sinking would have been widely honoured in South Africa. It is some consolation to know that, at last, it is."

The Queen, on the fourth day of her South African state visit, later visited a Soweto sports centre, where young cricketers and athletes are receiving skilled coaching under a British training programme initiated by John Major after his visit last year. The Queen met several paraplegics for whom the centre also caters.

The Queen also visited Baragwanath hospital in Soweto, the largest in the southern hemisphere, and watched a group from the youth section of the Planned Parenthood Federation perform a dramatised version of a poem by Alan Paton, the South African writer, about a delinquent boy who dies in a reformatory. "We teach protected sex because it is the only way to cut down delinquency in this country," a group leader told the Queen.

Had it been white men who drowned, they would have been widely honoured in South Africa

Police raid 80 homes after neo-Nazi 'ringleader' seized

FROM MICHAEL KALLENBACH IN BONN

IN A key move against the neo-Nazi movement, German police yesterday carried out dawn raids on 80 homes after the arrest of an American in Denmark.

The Germans have already begun proceedings to extradite Gary Lauck, of Lincoln, Nebraska, who was arrested in Denmark last Monday. He allegedly has operated illegally in Germany for about 20 years, breaking German law by smuggling in hate mail and literature against foreigners and Jews, and then distributing it to neo-Nazi groups.

The Federal Criminal Office in Wiesbaden said Mr Lauck's

illegal material was sent in unmarked parcels from America, often by ship to Bremen, or European countries and then distributed in Germany. He is said to publish neo-Nazi magazines in more than ten languages, including Russian, and prints stickers and posters declaring "Foreigner Out!"

The authorities have had a long-standing international warrant for his arrest and there should be no legal problems in extraditing him, officials said. If Mr Lauck is found guilty, he faces up to five years in jail.

Willi Fundermann, of the criminal office, said: "We hope

we have succeeded in decisively upsetting this Nazi delivery system that has long been a thorn in our sides." The euphoria was shared in the Hamburg public prosecutor's office. "We hope to have now finally reached the ringleaders," said Rüdiger Bagger.

In the dawn raids, police confiscated weapons and ammunition, as well as banned literature published by the National Socialist German Workers' Party, the organisation headed by Mr Lauck. He denies that the Holocaust took place, and sponsors two neo-Nazi talk shows on cable television in America.

Woodpeckers turn spring into fall

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

THE merry tap-tap of American woodpeckers can be heard throughout the land, heralding spring, and, according to US electricity companies, knocking down millions of telegraph poles.

Union Electric announced this week that it has invested \$25,000 (£16,000) in a two-year scientific survey to find out why woodpeckers prefer to make their nests in poles rather than living trees.

Some seven million telegraph poles have to be replaced every year in the US, many as a result of damage wrought by woodpeckers, according to the National Rural Electricity Co-operative Association in Washington.

The poles are supposed to last more than 20 years, but in remote areas with dense woodpecker populations they often last less than five before falling over and plunging rural areas into darkness.

Over time, woodpeckers can hollow out almost an entire pole, leaving a shell and posing a serious hazard to any unwary electrician attempting to reach the top.

"Sometimes it's like a Swiss cheese, full of holes," according to one worker.

The electricity companies have tried various remedies: spraying chemicals to harden the wood, wire mesh, gaudy lights and even metal casings. But a woodpecker can drill through a metal sheet in a few hours.

Algerian opposition figures meet

FROM MICHAEL KALLENBACH IN BONN

London: Members of the Algerian opposition were received by the British Foreign Office yesterday in what was believed to be one of the first such receptions by a European government. The delegation included Abdelhamid Brahimi, a former Algerian prime minister, who described the meeting as "positive".

In Algeria Islamic extremists shot dead Abdelhoushab Ben Boulaid, 50, the son of one of Algeria's independence war heroes.

General freed

Lagos: The Nigerian military junta has ordered the release of General Olusegun Obasanjo, a former head of state, who was detained last week. The general will now be kept under house arrest. (AFP)

Sex register

New York: Men engaging in homosexual acts will have to register with local police, along with rapists, child-molesters and murderers under a Bill passed by the Montana state senate.

Tutsis march

Bujumbura: Between 2,000 and 3,000 Tutsi students marched through the Burundi capital, accusing the UN special envoy of siding with armed Hutus, and demanded that he leave. (AFP)



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Foreign Ministers warn Ankara of world outcry over Kurdish civilian casualties

Iraq attack 'could harm Turkey's EU prospects'

By MICHAEL BINYON, DIPLOMATIC EDITOR
AND MICHAEL KALLENBACH IN BONN

EUROPEAN Foreign Ministers yesterday warned Turkey that its large-scale military incursion into northern Iraq could severely damage its image and political standing abroad.

Speaking in Ankara, Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, said the first pictures of civilian casualties in the area would make things very difficult for Turkey. His remarks reflected the views of Alain Juppé and Javier Solana, the French and Spanish Foreign Ministers, who represented the European Union in talks with Tansu Çiller, the Turkish Prime Minister, and Murat Karayalcin, her Foreign Minister.

M Juppé said Turkey's incursion went far beyond the right of hot pursuit. The EU

troika's warning that the sweep into Kurdish safe havens could damage Turkey's planned customs union with the EU came on the fourth day of operations in the mountains of northern Iraq. On Wednesday evening, Kurdish guerrillas ambushed a Turkish military convoy. The guerrillas killed three soldiers in the remote province of Tunceli, but 12 guerrillas also died.

Turkish artillery and jets yesterday continued to rain bombs on Kurdish strongholds. A spokesman with the forces said troops were preparing to move against suspected Kurdish fighters north of the border town of Zakho. Artillery shelled the area for the second day running and planes took off from three bases in eastern Turkey for

bombing runs. Turkey has strongly denied that its operations have hit the civilian population. The army said it had set up a special co-ordination centre in Zakho to help civilians. A spokesman admitted that 13 soldiers had been killed by Wednesday morning.

M Juppé said the EU was worried about the "massive size" of the operation, which had no time limit, and by the

harm it could do to civilians. He warned that the damage to Turkey could lead in September to a veto by the European Parliament of its attempts to abolish customs barriers with the EU. However, he insisted that the principle of territorial integrity had to be upheld, and had received assurances on that point from Ankara.

In Bonn, Herr Kinkel has been criticised by opposition politicians for his "feeble and

Nations relief efforts for Kurdish refugees in the safe haven area. The no-fly zone above the area is patrolled by British and American planes. A spokesman said also Britain had made it clear to Turkey that the principle of territorial integrity had to be upheld, and had received assurances on that point from Ankara.

soft" reaction to Turkey's intervention. He stopped short of urging Turkey to halt its invasion. Instead, he said the Government had a "justified self-interest", but called on Ankara to observe international law and human rights conventions.

Günter Verheugen, a leading Social Democratic politician, said he was embarrassed by his Foreign Minister's reaction. He said the German Government

had a duty to stop arms deliveries to Turkey, and warned that the customs union could be jeopardised. Echoing widespread criticism elsewhere in the German press, the *Süddeutsche Zeitung* said German criticism would be more credible if Bonn stopped using Turkey as a dumping ground for all sorts of military hardware.

The PKK is banned in Germany. But there has been

a rash of arson attacks on Turkish-owned businesses over the past two weeks.

Russia also expressed concern yesterday, saying it was worried by reports of civilian casualties and wanted the operation to be short. Russia and America gave tacit support to the operation at the beginning, but Moscow said yesterday that urgent measures should be taken to prevent further bloodshed.



Turkish soldiers protect their ears as artillery pounds Kurdish positions in northern Iraq yesterday. Bomber aircraft from three bases in Turkey also joined the attack

Depletion of Atlantic fish stock 'a disaster'

By BEN MACINTYRE

NEW ENGLAND'S Atlantic fishing grounds, once the most bountiful off America, are so depleted that the region should be declared a natural disaster area, according to William Weld, the Governor of Massachusetts.

Stocks of cod, haddock and flounder have reached record lows and America's oldest industry is facing catastrophe. The *Republican Governor* said, calling on President Clinton to provide federal relief to the state's beleaguered fishermen. For the region to qualify for relief, it must be proved that shrinking fish stocks are the result of natural forces. Most scientific studies, however, have concluded that the calamity is due to over-fishing.

In his petition to the President, Mr Weld said the dwindling fish population was caused by "unfavourable environmental conditions, predation and competition with other species". He went on to predict the "likely collapse of the traditional Massachusetts fishing industry within six months".

A week after Canada released a Spanish trawler impounded in international waters, Canadian authorities have increased patrols to protect the fishing near their borders and threatened to seize any craft found trawling for halibut on the Grand Banks, just outside the country's 200-mile legal jurisdiction.

Clinton's most feared opponent joins race

FROM MARTIN FLETCHER IN WASHINGTON

PETE WILSON, California's Governor and the last heavy-weight Republican to reveal his intentions, confirmed yesterday that he will seek the White House in 1996.

Mr Wilson announced the formation of a presidential exploratory committee, a move enabling him to set up a national campaign organisation and the last formal step required before an official declaration expected in May. This weekend Mr Wilson is holding fundraisers in Boston, New York and Washington.

The 61-year-old former marine is the Republican President Clinton most fears, because it would be almost impossible for him to win re-election without California. But for Mr Wilson, winning his party's nomination is probably a harder task than winning the general election.

His strengths are obvious. He boasts the largest and richest political base in America, and raised \$26 million (£16.5 million) for last year's re-election campaign alone. He has a formidable track record, having nursed California through an almost biblical series of earthquakes, floods, fires, droughts and riots over the past five years and having restored the state's economy from the near-depression of the early 1990s.

Though frequently described as bland, he is a brilliant, ruthless campaigner with an uncanny ability to identify the concerns of the all-important middle-class white voters. No American politician has more

shrewdly exploited public anger about crime, welfare abuse, illegal immigration and, most recently, special treatment for minorities.

Mr Wilson has lost just one of 10 elections in a 28-year career as state legislator, San Diego mayor, US senator and governor, and sailed back into office last November having had the lowest approval rating — 19 per cent — of any governor in California history just two years earlier. The sunny beaches of California are strewn with the bones of those who underestimated Pete Wilson, said Haley Barbour, the Republican party chairman.

Mr Wilson's big problem is that he is loved by the Religious Right and distrusted by the conservative activists who largely determine the Republican nominee. He is



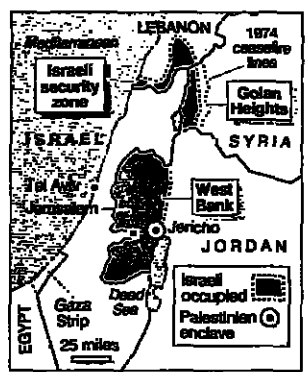
Wilson: reputation as ruthless campaigner

pro-choice and has supported gay rights — stands that could cost him dearly in Iowa, the Christian Right stronghold which holds next year's first caucus. In 1991 he enacted a record \$7.3 billion tax increase in California, a move that will surely hurt him in tax-hating New Hampshire even though he is now proposing a 15 per cent cut.

Mr Wilson's strategy would be to survive Iowa and New Hampshire, build momentum in more amenable states like New York, Ohio, Maryland and Florida, then seal the nomination by capturing the huge California delegation next March 26. If that happened, he would enjoy a tumultuous coronation at the Republican convention in San Diego, his home city, though he cannot be sure of winning his home state's primary.

Many Californians strongly resent him running for president less than five months after he was re-elected governor, especially as he had pledged not to. Californian conservatives have loathed Mr Wilson ever since he backed Gerald Ford, not Ronald Reagan, for the Republicans' 1976 presidential nomination.

A recent poll showed Californian Republicans actually preferred Robert Dole, the Senate leader, to Mr Wilson by 49 per cent to 22, and 18 of California's 55 Republican state legislators have endorsed the other frontrunner, Phil Gramm, the conservative Texas senator.



Jericho loses faith in Arafat

FROM CHRISTOPHER WALKER IN JERICHO

THE residents of Jericho, whose high hopes for the fruits of Palestinian self-rule have been dashed, prepared yesterday to welcome Yasser Arafat, the chief of the Palestinian Authority. The visit will be his second since the Israelis left this West Bank enclave ten months ago.

"Of course, we are angry with Arafat. Since he moved to Gaza, we have been forgotten. The investors have run away and land prices have slumped," said Imad Barazi, who owns a gift shop overlooking the central square of this biblical city. "I lost \$100,000 (£63,300) on the value of my shop because he decided not to have his headquarters here."

Today, Mr Arafat will host a visit by Al Gore, the American Vice-President, and tomorrow, chair the weekly session of the 24-member Palestinian Cabinet, normally held in Gaza. But behind the bustle, he will face a people convinced that the hopes raised by autonomy have not been realised.

"Business is now worse than before the peace. The city is like a prison, we cannot even travel to Jerusalem without a permit from Israel," said Tawfiq Nawaiser, head of the Chamber of Commerce. "How can this be peace? I want the Jews to come here."

Since Mr Arafat abandoned plans to have a base here, Jericho has become a monument to thwarted aspirations, namely that the end of Israeli rule would herald a new era of democracy. "As it is, there are probably now more secret policemen here than anywhere in the world," said one nervous merchant. Some had asked him to hang out flags for Mr Arafat.

Nato chief resists pressure to resign as scandals deepen

FROM GEORGE BROCK IN BRUSSELS

PRESSURE is mounting on Willy Claes to step down as Secretary-General of Nato. In spite of the proliferating Belgian scandals that have touched him, however, he seems determined to hang on. Although many diplomats and officials at Nato are sure that his days are numbered as the alliance's top civilian official, none is able to force him to resign. Faced with a sequence of embarrassing disclosures about slush money paid to the Flemish Socialist party, of which he was a leading light, Mr Claes insists that he did nothing wrong and that he will co-operate with any inquiry.

Calls for him either to go or explain himself multiplied in Belgium yesterday in the wake of Wednesday evening's resignation of Frank Vandembroucke, the country's Foreign Minister, who admitted ordering a party official to burn money held in a safe-deposit box. "It's about time that Willy Claes and Karel van Miert (Belgium's European Commissioner) showed their faces," said the daily *Het Volk*. Mr van Miert preceded Mr Vandembroucke as head of the Flemish Socialists. He denied any wrongdoing after police searched his office some weeks ago.

Gerard Deprez, leader of Belgium's French-speaking Christian Democrats, said he was "perplexed" that Mr Claes remained in office while Mr Vandembroucke had re-

signed. "I note that for the moment Claes is not resigning while a lot of elements would lead one to think he could hold greater responsibility than Vandembroucke," he said.

Nato governments are left in the tricky position of trying to work out who might replace Mr Claes if he goes, while being unable to admit in public that the thought has even crossed their minds.

The private judgment that Mr Claes cannot continue for long does not rest on any verdict made at Nato about the complex imbroglio over helicopters and bribes which has dominated Belgian political life for the past few weeks. Governments simply do not see how the "Agusta" scandal could leave Mr Claes alone in the near future.

Whatever the results of trials which do not begin until later this year, three and a half years of inquiry have already led to a thorough house-cleaning by both Socialist parties here. Four ministers have resigned so far and more disclosures seem inevitable. The coalition Government, which includes both the damaged parties of the Left, awaits May's general election with trepidation.

Contrails investigated: A magistrate is investigating the award of contracts to build the headquarters of the European Parliament in Brussels after complaints from Thierry Jean-Pierre, a French MEP and himself a former magistrate.

Trade chief sets out agenda for expansion

By MICHAEL BINYON

RENATO RUGGIERO, Italy's former trade minister who is to be confirmed in Geneva today as head of the new World Trade Organisation, sees two main challenges for the body which has to translate the Uruguay Round into practice: integrating developing countries into the international economy and the conflict between economic interdependence and lingering protectionism.

Signor Ruggiero, a former European Commission aide to Roy Jenkins, has been emphasising his opposition to protectionism since America announced earlier this year that it did not support his candidacy because he was too protectionist. Washington has now dropped its objections, leaving the way open for the European Union candidate to take over from Peter Sutherland, the acting head.

"We cannot go back to the protectionism of the 1930s. Trade is the main tool of globalisation," Signor Ruggiero said. The world had important interests in bringing China and Russia into the system. "They must respect the rules of the game. But we have to adapt all international institutions to globalisation."

Signor Ruggiero has said that the organisation's main job would be implementing the Gatt agreements on trade liberalisation, especially in difficult areas such as textiles. For this, it had to be decisive, effective and vigorous. The body had also to look more closely at relations between trade and the environment.

Leading article, page 17



Ruggiero: aims to bring in Russia and China

Hopes for Manhattan waxworks wane

FROM BEN MACINTYRE IN NEW YORK

PLANS for a Madame Tussaud's waxworks museum on Manhattan's 42nd Street have melted away after a heated bidding war over New York property.

The British company has abandoned a project to build a \$45 million (£28 million) hi-tech entertainment complex after three years of negotiations to buy one of the city's most famous landmarks ended in failure this week.

Pearson, Madame Tussaud's parent company, had fixed its sights on One Times Square, the 22-storey silver tower adorned with glittering neon signs on the corner of Broadway and Times Square. The company had predicted that up to 2 million tourists a year would visit its planned entertainment centre, described as "a celebration of New York". The building was acquired by Lehman Brothers,

the investment banking firm, for \$27.5 million after a fierce bidding tussle with Pearson earlier this year. The British company then offered an additional \$2.5 million, but Lehman Brothers — which had reportedly demanded an additional \$10 million — rejected the bid.

"Lehman rejected our final offer, so we've decided to look elsewhere in the world for leisure development opportunities," a Pearson spokesman said.

Madame Tussaud's was one of the first entertainment companies to show an interest in developing Times Square, and New York officials described the breakdown in negotiations as a big setback to efforts to reclaim the run-down district from sex shops and drug dealers. "It's a big shame for the street that the deal fell apart," John Livingstone, of Tishman

Urban Development Corporation, told *The New York Observer*. "It was a unique concept that would have promoted tourism in a unique location."

Disney Company has outlined a project to redevelop the New Amsterdam Theatre in Times Square, but has insisted that other companies must commit themselves to rejuvenating the area before plans go ahead. The British Virgin Group will open a fashion and entertainment centre nearby at Broadway and 45th Street later this year, while MTV Networks and AMC Entertainment company are also contemplating developing the area. Half the offices at One Times Square are vacant, and Pearson clearly hoped to buy the tower from the Banque Nationale de Paris at a bargain price at a bankruptcy sale last January.

Saddam's son 'badly wounded' in ambush

FROM MICHAEL THEODOULOU IN NICOSIA

PRESIDENT Saddam Hussein of Iraq remained silent yesterday about reports in the Middle East that Uday, his eldest son and heir apparent, was seriously wounded in an assassination attempt earlier this month.

Uday, once a family outcast for clubbing to death his father's foodtaster, was rehabilitated after the Gulf War and acquired a host of titles. His control of a growing media empire and a pivotal role in the black market has enabled him to penetrate Iraqi society at all levels.

Several gunmen from a Kurdish opposition group are reported to have ambushed and seriously wounded Uday, 31, in Baghdad in mid-March, days after a reported coup attempt. Uday, like his father whose bullish body language he has copied, is widely feared at least one double as a decoy against assassins.

Iraqi sources said Uday was taken to the prestigious Hussein Medical Centre in Jordan for emergency surgery on gunshot wounds. This is denied by Jordan.

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FROM 75 MINUTES BY CAR FERRY, 30 MINUTES BY HOVERCRAFT.

The closure of Dewhurst is not a victory for the vegetarians but for discerning meat-eaters, says Libby Purves

How to avoid Mad Faddist Disease

AS DEWHURST the butchers and their 1,500 innocent employees faced the receivers, the Vegetarian Society displayed its usual, unlovely triumphalism.

"Anything that takes the butcher's shops off the high street is a triumph for vegetarians," crowed Carol Timperley. No doubt Linda McCartney will be out soon, to dance upon the Dewhurst grave brandishing her latest line in muck-about mung bean cutlets. They think it is a famous victory.

I am not sure, however, that they are right. For one thing, the supermarkets are still turning out burgers and kebabs; for another, there are hundreds of independent specialist butchers which regularly sport long queues of people. These are the carnivores who are

prepared to spend money to be sure of decent, well-treated meat. Dewhurst, an old-fashioned cheap outlet, just fell between two stools, offering neither the convenience of the supermarket nor the quality of the specialist.

There are other theories. One pundit suggested that the fall-off in high street butchery is due to the decline in popularity of red meat. Certainly there are always plenty of batty celebrities to boast that they never touch red meat any more, but this particular distinction has always mystified me.

There are, to be sure, some disgusting systems of raising tasteless and over-medicated animals for the mass meat trade, but red and white have nothing to do with it.

If animal welfare is your concern, it ought to be obvious that a sheep on the Welsh hills has a much better life — and contributes more to environmental balance — than a battery chicken or a factory turkey. Or, for that matter, a farmed salmon.



If these people never touched intensively reared meat, that would make sense; so would an avoidance of fatty meat. But when pork is bred as lean as chicken, and chicken is pumped full of even more chemicals than beef, nobody who talks red versus white is really thinking.

And we ought to. We have fallen into the habit of eating too much meat and thinking about it too little. Rather than eat a bacon sandwich for breakfast, a

burger for lunch and stew for supper, all of them from debased animals in cruel, chemically supported systems, we might be better off saving our carnivorous desires for the occasional pound of sausages or really good joint from a hardy, free-ranging, slow-growing animal, either bearing the organic symbol or originating from a source we know. But — not least because of the hysterical proselytising of the vegetarians — too many customers still close their minds entirely to the subject. They either dismiss all meat as cruel and unwhole-

some, or grab it, shrink-wrapped and disguised, off the shelf and refuse to associate it with animals. Which is one reason why Dewhurst, where you had to look at the meat hanging there, suffered, and supermarkets don't.

There is a middle way. You can eat meat but insist on knowing a bit about it: how the animal lived, how far it travelled to its death and whether it was considered treated, rather than stressed by the time it died that they bunged it full of artificial tenderiser. That kind of realism is not easy, not at first. But it produces the best meals, and — as a consumer pressure — the best farming. It also saves you from even having to contemplate buying a Linda McCartney frozen meal.



Mary Sheepshanks, whose book came out after her husband died: "I hope I might make someone else think, 'My life's not over; it's just changed'"

Tale of a wild writing granny

Mary Sheepshanks had

copied when her husband, Charlie, died after ten years of painful illnesses: when she had had to leave their family home Arthington Hall, in Yorkshire, to live alone for the first time in her 62 years. But when the postman delivered a bundle of copies of her first novel, *A Price for Everything*, she "howled and howled and howled".

"I felt total euphoria," she says, her clear blue eyes misting with tears. "But then I so wished Charlie was there. I promised him that when I was alone I would write, and here was the proof."

Mary had known her husband since she was a child, and married him at 19. Her father, Geoffrey Nickson, was a housemaster at Eton. Charlie, 20 years her senior, was the headmaster of its "feeder" school, Sunningdale.

For 14 years she patched scabby knees, organised school plays and penned bulletins to distant mothers. "I didn't know what a verruca was, so I wrote 'Dear Lady X. Your son has a faroukha', and received a very puzzled letter back."

In 1961, the Sheepshanks inherited Arthington, near

widowed, so I moved there in a gesture of defiance," she says, tilting her chin. "Against all the odds and expectations, the cancer never came back and we had our halcyon years there."

Until, that is, Charlie, "a wonderful eccentric," fell ill again. "Oh, it's boring to list everything that was wrong with him," she sighs. "He had one huge coronary, then two more, then a stroke." It was, she says, a relief when he died in 1991, but by then the house and the gardens he had lovingly restored had "gone to rack and ruin". The house, built in 1802 by the Yorkshire architect John Carr, was put on the market but nobody would have it.

Now Mary lives five miles away across the River Wharfe in a cosy cottage lined with portraits of Sheepshanks — they were originally wool merchants who went to market to sell sheep's hanks. The dining room, where we are sitting with a deaf golden retriever wheezing under the sideboard, is dominated by a wall-sized

Julia Llewellyn Smith meets the woman whose first novel was published in her sixties

tapestry, which Charlie worked on for seven years, of the bluebell woods and gleaming river that were the view from Arthington, a suitable screen for his wife's "word processor and mess".

The house is still — just — in the family. The son and heir, Will, who works for Sotheby's in York, lives there with his wife, Alice, and their baby daughter. Whether they can keep it depends on selling the outlying cottages, farm and garden. "Of course, everyone except me is telling them they are mad to stay," says Mary, as she whisks me around its peeling, cavernous rooms and

up the suspended staircase which bridges the two landings and wobbles like a ship's deck as you walk on it.

She is terrified, however, of being a nagging mother-in-law and refuses to return unannounced. Instead, she has diverted her feelings into the novel. *A Price for Everything* is about a woman determined to hold on to her dilapidated stately home despite the distractions of her husband's philanderings, her flighty mother-in-law and demanding children. It is a touchingly wise and extremely funny Aga saga, that stands up perfectly to comparisons with the mistress of the genre, Joanna Trollope.

It was written nine years ago, before Trollope's time, and then "stuck in the back of a drawer and forgotten about". In the lonely days after Charlie's death, Mary, who had published two volumes of poetry, kept putting off writing. "Every night I would go to bed and I hadn't written and I hated myself. I felt unmotivated and quite panicky."

But this dainty, funny woman is not a whinger. "I hate people who wear hair shirts," she says. "I enjoy myself madly, even in the depths of grief." She decided to join a journalism correspondence course and was surprised when her tutor asked to see her discarded novel. "Then she rang up and asked if I would mind her showing it to an agent. Mind?" The blue eyes open wide. "I nearly fell off my chair."

Now the book is published, the house is a bower of publisher's flowers, and rights have been sold to Germany and America. "My children think I shall go to New York and suddenly have an affair with a cigar-chewer called Buck Rosenbloom," she giggles. A second novel, *Facing the Music*, has been accepted. "It has been such a compensation," she says, "and now my children don't have to worry about me because I have something of my own."

One of her 14 grandchildren has started referring to his "wild writing granny". "At this stage in my life I've started a career," she breathes. "I hope that, just as people such as Mary Wesley encouraged me, I might make someone else think 'My life's not over; it's just changed. It's different and I will start again.'"

● *A Price for Everything*, Century (£16.99 hdbk; £5.99 pbk)

Anne McElvoy laments a rift between pop's aristocrats

Will love come to the aid of Geldof?

To the roll-call of legendary conjugal unhappiness, King Arthur and Guinevere, Anna and Karenin, Charles and Diana, we must now, sadly, add the names of Bob Geldof and Paula Yates.

The most photographed marital breakdown since the heir to the throne and his spouse were first snapped pointing in opposite directions on foreign trips reached its denouement on Monday when *The Sun* caught Paula "in a bottom-hugging dress", creeping out of a Kent hotel at an incriminatingly early hour, in the company of the grumpy INXS singer Michael Hutchence.

On the same day, the Curse of *Hello!* struck with a vengeance. The magazine, which has an uncanny knack of publishing photographs of illustrious couples in candlelit poses — just as less discreet publications catch them flinging plates at each other or themselves at someone else — produced a picture spread showing Hutchence cuddling up to Danish model Helena Christensen. "My relationship with Michael is as steady as everyone else's," she cooed. That, when you think about it, isn't saying very much.

Still, Bob and Paula's rift gives rise to a twinge of national sadness. They were, in their way, an institution, household names for being — er, what exactly? Well, parents to Fifi Tribble, Peaches Honeyblossom and Little Pixie, for a start; each daughter's name an arch tribute to the wackiness of their parents, who rather desperately sought to combine an open marriage and a rollicking good time with the trophies of aspiration: prep school and ponies for the girls, manor house in the country for weekends.

They were the first generation of rock aristocracy, courtesy of Bob's honorary knighthood for organising Live Aid's famine relief. This laudable appeal to the slumbering compassion of pop fans consolidated the modest fame he had earned for wearing pyjamas and singing with *The Boomtown Rats*, who were in the charts when INXS were

still strumming tennis rackets in front of the bedroom mirror.

Not an awful lot has happened since Live Aid in Bob's career, other than becoming, in Hutchence's calculated sneer, "a saint", and Paula is principally known for interviewing people in bed on TV, at a time of the morning when most viewers are themselves still in bed. But no matter. They had reached the coveted status of being famous for being famous — a trait shared with contemporary royalty.

With his attachment to wor-

paint rather than the glossy variety. Her mother was a six-foot beauty queen from Blackpool and a Bluebell dancer; her late father Jess Yates, aka "The Bishop", presenter of the schmaltzy *Stars on Sunday*. An unfair hostage to the moral standards of his nickname, he was sacked for having an affair with a younger woman.

Having pursued Bob with such persistence that he tagged her "the limper", he succumbed to her charms in the back of his limousine. Even the courtship appears to have been scripted in the clichés of the rock novel, from its groupie beginnings to the five-dollar wedding in Nevada.

But while she remains a natural born partygoer, Bob has embraced domesticity and fatherhood, babysitting the children during his wife's absence from their home, cancelling his social engagements and refusing to chew over the split in public, despite the promptings of "quote-hungry" friends.

In days when some royals pour out the ungainly secrets of their hearts to biographers and journalists and the deputy governor of the Bank of England dishonourably trashes a long-standing love-affair as a mere fling, Geldof has displayed a rare dignity and directness about his loss. "I am a little bit sad I suppose," he said. "I guess it's a trial separation. I'll just stay in love with her. Things will be resolved amicably."

The showman may not be a saint, but he looks like becoming the nearest thing we have around to a gentleman.

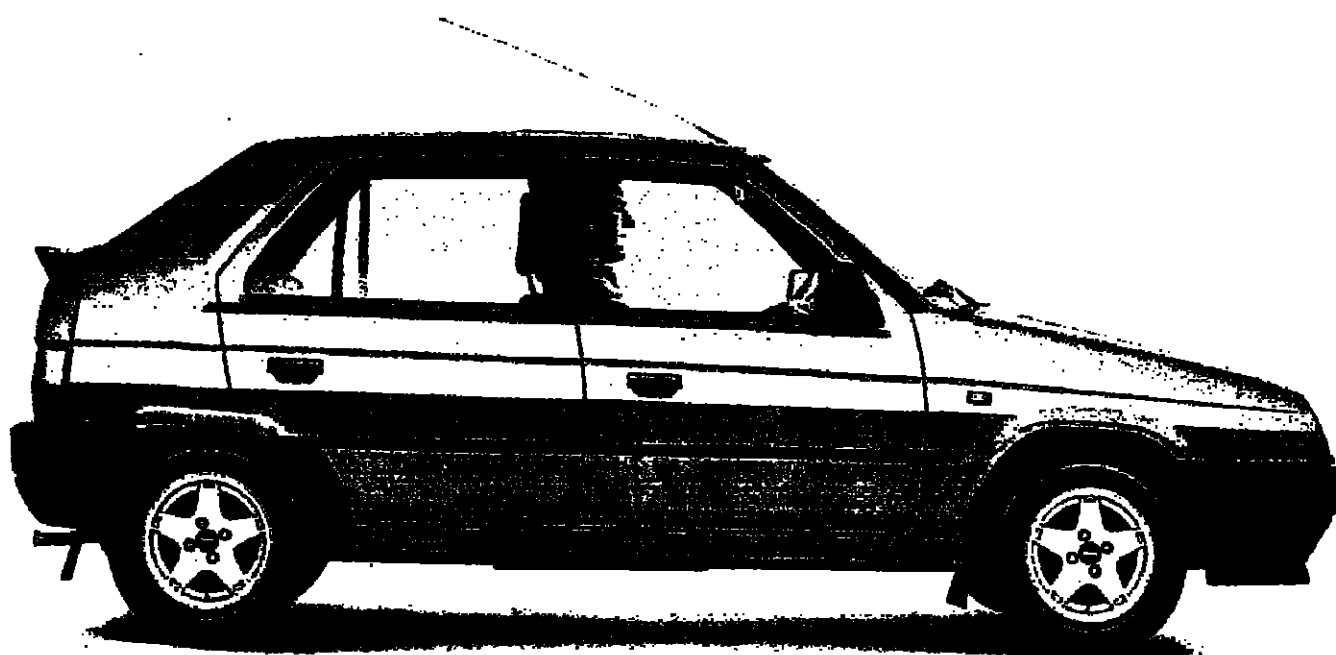


No holding hands: Bob and Paula yesterday

thy, doomed causes, his inarticulate but heartfelt outbursts on behalf of the poor, his unhappy expression and brooding streak, Bob was a Prince for the common man, and Paula provided the perfect Alternative Princess, complete with expensive but execrable taste in clothes, a tendency to show off her legs and décolleté, and a love of giggly Chelsea Girl escapades.

Like royalty, they attracted gossipy but always anonymous friends. Stories about the couple's split are invariably spiced up with recourse to "sources close to the Geldofs", disclosing details of Paula's fears and peculiarities, Bob's sulky introversion.

Paula is infuriating, but difficult to dislike, since her artifice is so wholehearted. In her mid-thirties, she is



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Eileen Atkins on her nun-like life as a Broadway superstar — and 15 months away from her husband in London

'I don't mind playing old women, but really I want to be funny'

New York has decreed that for Eileen Atkins at 60, her prime has come. It is Sunday afternoon in a packed, shabby off-Broadway theatre, with hard seats and gigantic Diet Cokes on sale. The spectacle before us is the final performance of *Vita and Virginia*, in which the powerful double-act of Atkins, who devised the piece and plays Virginia, and Vanessa Redgrave, as Vita, have made it standing room only for the past five months.

Redgrave on stage towers in her britches ('Snowdon, who took one of the last photos of Vita, told us they weren't boots but gaiters — so her legs really did look like beech trees') androgynous, statuesque, coloratura-voiced, glowing, in brazen uninhibited flow. Atkins, dowdy and greyly plain in her droopy tea-gown, appears to be conceding the stage to this Amazon. But here's the trick: Redgrave gazes avidly and ravenously on Virginia, as if drawing the audience always back to Atkins, who has all the wit and irony: 'If I were she, I would merely stare with eleven elk-hounds behind me.'

They take their standing ovations by bounding towards each other and embracing. Redgrave presenting Atkins with a huge trug of brilliant spring bulbs.

It is all staggeringly different from the London version. Not only was Penelope Wilton's excellent Vita a much quieter creation, but the enthusiastic American audience plainly still reveres Bloomsbury, while the British are heartily exhausted with it. Writers (Mike Nichols, Elaine May, Ruth Prawer Jhabvala) have flocked to see the play. Atkins has added more material from the collection of Woolf's letters in the New York Public Library. Scholars queue outside her dressing-room. Actresses across the world (in Sweden, Liv Ullmann and Bibi Andersson; in France, Jeanne Moreau) want to do it.

Backstage, I saw a plump black woman telling Atkins

she longed to play Virginia in Brazil. 'Of course you can play her,' Atkins lied valiantly. 'It's a play about friendship.' (We privately marvel at the notion of a black, Brazilian Virginia Woolf.)

Redgrave and Atkins, two utterly different middle-aged women, first met at Stratford in the 1950s when Atkins resented Redgrave's effortless dynastic supremacy. 'But we haven't had so much as a tiff. You can never tell what alche-

nothing except a good table in restaurants.'

We are now at the best table in the Union Square Café. The waiter tells us Paul Newman was in the other night. Yes, Atkins says. Newman and Joanne Woodward had come to see her show. Someone had asked Newman how his skin was so taut at 71. 'I will tell you, but you'll never do it,' he replied. 'Every morning I get a bowl of ice-cubes and put my face into it.'

Atkins has been living a nun-like existence on the 17th floor of a residential hotel in midtown Manhattan, following a rigorous schedule: rehearsals all day for her new Broadway play, eating alone at 5.30pm (with the waiters, who are resting actors, pulling up a chair to join her), then walking to the theatre for the evening performance as Mrs Woolf.

'The worst thing is not seeing any greenery, not seeing any life, trees, birds, animals of any kind. At home I live on the Thames and I see herons from my window. Here I have to go into Central Park just in the hope of seeing a squirrel. John Standing was here the other day and said furiously, of New Yorkers: 'They don't drink. They don't smoke. All they do is PE.' I think I'm the only person in New York,' says Atkins, 'who doesn't wear trainers.'

THE VALERIE GROVE INTERVIEW



my will work. Sometimes I think it's because Vanessa really thinks of me as Virginia Woolf. She does live her parts you know. Now she says: 'I don't want to act with a man again'. And Vanessa loves men — we both do.

'She will soon have three grandchildren, yet she doesn't look a day over 35, does she? Off stage she is utterly without vanity, wears no make-up and a very limited, simple wardrobe consisting of two pairs of jeans and two tops. Vanessa gives all her money to The Cause.'

Characteristically, Redgrave roped in Atkins to do a benefit for Sarajevo. Atkins chose to make a speech for the student audience about the deadly sin of wanting to be famous. 'I told them: "Your children will not know who Madonna was." They could not believe that: that fame is ephemeral, extremely uncomfortable and not to be gone after. What is Marlon Brando to young people now? Just a fat man. Fame means absolutely

We are interrupted by an elderly director, 'Miss Atkins, I just wanted to tell you you're my favourite actor of all time.' This is typical: unembarrassed, they stop her in the street and tell her how terrific she is. 'We did have wonderful audiences in London, too,' she says, 'but they were very small. And we didn't make money. Here we've made the producers more money than anything off-Broadway.'

Last Friday's *Kaleidoscope* from New York tried to celebrate 'the British taking on Broadway', citing the Lloyd Webbers, Friel, three Stoppards, Tom Courtenay and James Fox in *Uncle*



Eileen Atkins: 'The worst thing in New York is not seeing any greenery — at home I see herons from my window'

Vanya, and the Ralph Fiennes *Hamlet* about to arrive from Hackney. But it savages Atkins when people bang on about the success of the Brits. 'We think the Americans are show-offs, yet it's us who keep crowing: "The British are coming." All it does is harm us here.'

Atkins explained, to a presenter who called her 'Elaine' Atkins, that the West End now wants only film and television stars. 'That's why people like Alan Rickman and Juliet Stevenson have been very clever to make their way into films. Have I spent 41 years in the theatre just to hope to get a television series? And my London agent says: "If only we could get you a play at the Almeida." It's terribly tempting to stay here. My American agent looks after me so well he practically comes down and runs my bath for me.'

Atkins has waited a long time for all this. She was born to a book-starved childhood in a north London council house. Her father read gas meters, and hated having books in the house. Her mother was a seamstress. They wanted Eileen to be a Tiller Girl.

The parts did not come her way in her twenties, when she was married to Julian Glover (a marriage that ended with his affair with Sarah Miles). In her thirties she matured into *Electra*, *The Duchess of*

she took it to Broadway. 'I'm not a good winger. I work very conscientiously and hard. When I first did *A Room of One's Own* in Hampstead, I barely knew it. By the time I brought it to Broadway, I'd worked on it and honed it in

four months on tour. London never saw what it became in the end. Same with *Vita and Virginia*.'

Les Parents Terribles opens next week on Broadway, with a misleading and forgettable new title, *Indiscretions*. Atkins

had a strange premonition, while watching it at the National in London, that she would be asked to play the Frances de la Tour part. She plays Kathleen Turner's sister, but refuses to do even the slightest American accent

'because Americans collapse in laughter when they hear our American accents, just as we do when they do English ones'. She plays an old maid 'but she does have the most divine underwear'.

By the end of the eight-month run, she will have been absent for 15 months from home in Chiswick: by which time her husband, Bill Shepherd, whom she famously met in a lift 16 years ago and married two weeks later, will, she says, be 'getting a bit fed-up'.

'I love Britain, and I couldn't live anywhere else, but I do have our dislike of success and the way people like Tom Paulin tear people down. I'm offered plenty at home but the stuff I'm offered here is better. I'm not so hemmed in by my age here. I don't want to do the 900th *Seagull* or *Cherry Orchard*.'

She had her sixtieth birthday in Washington, where she was presented with a cake of mashed potato as she had been whining nostalgically for meat and two veg. 'Maggie Smith said: "I only play grotesques now." I don't mind playing elderly roles, but I mainly want to be funny.' If only she could do two *Cold Comfort Farm*s a year.

One critic said she had the timing of Jack Benny, and those who have heard her oft-told anecdote — when she was jeered at by workmen outside Harrods about the size of her breasts, marched furiously out of Harrods and accosted the workmen with a shrill insult about the size of their penises, only to realise with horror that she had come out of a different door and insulted a different set of astonished labourers — will agree.

We await her next collaboration with Jean Marsh, with whom she created the immensely successful *Upstairs Downstairs* and *The House of Eliott*. It will be *Lady's Maid*, from Margaret Forster's novel about Elizabeth Barrett Browning's maid, Wilson. 'Without showing off too much, I think I am a very good editor. I do know how to lift things that are important, but I can't write dialogue. Jean can. So we work together like a dream.'

She is a worrier, an insomniac and a worker. 'People want "happiness" as if it just happens. But happiness arrives gradually, after you have worked very, very hard at something.'

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Malfe, The Lady from the Sea, St Joan, Elizabeth I. She played a series of strife-torn mothers: Mrs Morel in *Sons and Lovers*, the mother in *Equus*, John Osborne's hated mother in *A Better Class of Person*, the mother of a gay son (and wife of a gay husband) in *The Lost Language of Cranes* ('We were almost expecting the dog to come out and say he was gay,' said one critic).

Then she was Virginia Woolf in the BBC's *Great Writers* series — and realised that she was born to reincarnate the long, lean, bony-faced Woolf. It is now six years since she took the bold feminist polemic of Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* and delivered it (as it was originally delivered, a lecture to the ladies of Girtton in 1928) brilliantly at Hampstead. After ecstatic reviews

This advertisement was placed by the Newspaper Publishers Association.

Blair talks the language of Thatcher

Paul Johnson applauds the new emphasis on duties above rights

For years I have been begging politicians to talk about duties instead of rights. The only one who would listen was Margaret Thatcher, and she did not need to be told. She always thought and spoke in terms of duties. Now along comes another politician who uses the forbidden D-word and he, amazingly, is leader of the Labour Party. This is one of many reasons why I regard the emergence of Tony Blair, not just as a national leader but as a natural leader, as the best thing to happen in British politics since Mrs Thatcher won the Tory leadership in 1975.

"Duty is the cornerstone of a decent society." "The rights we receive should reflect the duties we owe." These and other sayings of Tony Blair in his *Spectator* lecture this week ought to be music to the ears of all sensible men and women. Why? Because a society primarily based on duties, rather than rights, is far more likely to work.

Traditional societies were duty-based because they were religion-based. Strictly speaking, in a society such as medieval Christendom, no one had rights. Only God had rights. The rest had duties, to God and to each other. Rights were, in a sense, privileges (like leave in the army), to be awarded by charter to a town, a class or an individual. God could give a human being a right, and so could the Pope, as his vicar on earth.

or the King, who stood in God's place in secular matters. Magna Carta awarded or rather confirmed privileges which had been so long enjoyed as to seem rights. The Bill of Rights of 1689 was a confirmatory statute in the same tradition. Meanwhile, countless duties were enshrined in scripture, the Common Law, the statute law and Privy Council proclamations.

All this changed in 1789, when the French National Assembly proclaimed the Rights of Man. These were not privileges, originally bestowed *ex gratia* and transformed by long usage into rights; but secular, "natural" rights, with nothing to do with God or the King, but inherent in man's dignity as *Homo sapiens*. The French revolutionaries were not the only new-style middle-class legalistic philosophers who dreamed of a rights-based society. The statesmen of Virginia and Massachusetts had foreshadowed them in producing the American Declaration of Independence (1776), in which certain rights were said to be "self-evident".

The American Constitution of the 1780s was rights-based, and the first amendments to it were, and still are, termed the Bill of Rights. On the basis of these two documents, the American Supreme Court has erected a system of human rights of extraordinary complexity which now affects every aspect of human conduct. This system is imitated all over the world, incorporated into innumerable constitutions and solemn documents, including the European Declaration on Human Rights,

and is made the basis for further political demands. Those in Tony Blair's party who clamour for a written constitution and support Charter 88 are children of the rights-based tradition inaugurated by the French and American revolutions.

Unfortunately, there is a fatal weakness in any system based on rights. The demand for rights by men, women, children, the disabled, single mothers, homosexuals, minorities of every conceivable kind, is inexhaustible and the definition of legal rights can be indefinitely extended. The amount of justice available, however, is limited. Hence, when everyone demands rights, you do not end with the satisfaction of rights: you end with a conflict of rights.

This is happening in countless ways. The rights of children enshrined in the 1989 Act are already in distressing conflict with the rights of parents to raise their families in decency, and of teachers to preserve order in their classrooms. The right of the poor to enjoy benefits which are a fixed proportion of the average wage is in increasing conflict with the right of those with jobs to retain a reasonable proportion of their earnings after tax.

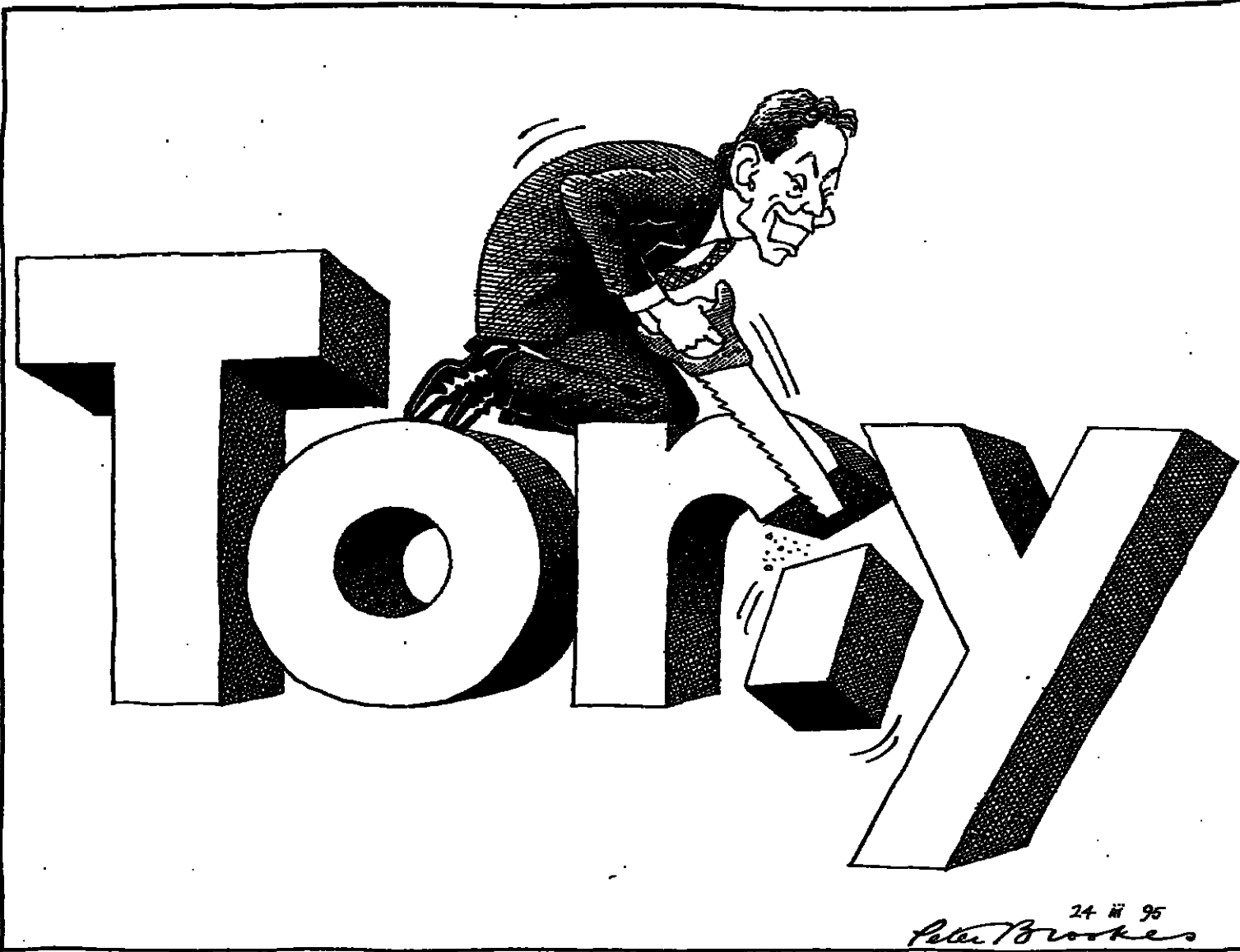
The right of underprivileged minorities to affirmative action or employment quotas is in conflict with the right of the majority to equal treatment in job-seeking. The right of a woman to abortion is in conflict with the unborn child's right to live.

Generations of British legislators, and the Founding Fathers in America, were able to introduce the concept of rights successfully because their societies were then imbued with a religious sense of duties. Today, the very word "duty" is associated with authoritarianism, obscurantist religion and the suppression of the human spirit. We no longer have a duty-motivated society. On the contrary: we have one where the clamour for rights increases all the time. On the left, insistence on rights, real or imaginary, plays the same demoralising role as the insistence on financial success plays on the right. The rights-clamour is the style of the me-me generation, the I-want-it-now philosophy which we normally associate with unbridled capitalism. It is the liberal-progressive form of materialism.

That is why Tony Blair's insistence on duties is so important. At a time when British politics has never seemed so devoid of moral purpose, this serious and principled young man has suddenly unfurled a quite unexpected moral banner. He is saying that the creation of a truly just society depends essentially on the willingness of all to perform their civic and moral duties.

That is a first-rate message for the next election. And if Tony Blair succeeds in holding this banner high, not least among his own followers, a great many people will fall in behind it.

Claiming ever more rights leads to conflict, not content



Misappliance of science

Technology marches on — but which of us understands enough to control it?

I learn that a disgruntled technician (this happened in Geneva, of all places) has just sabotaged the world's largest particle physics laboratory — by dismantling hundreds of complex electronic modules, a spokesman said.

Ah, yes, that is what the spokesman said, but it is not what I say. What I say is: "Be not deceived: God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."

Let us, for a little longer, discuss the spokesman; he has plenty to say. I can assure you. For instance: The spokesman for the European Particle Physics Laboratory said most of the 1,300 modules were found in hiding places under the flooring or behind walls, and appeared to be undamaged. It will take weeks to reinstall and test them. The modules controlled the operation of a huge particle accelerator known as a proton synchrotron.

Now, before I continue, I must make clear that I have no idea what a particle physics laboratory, large or small, is, nor do I understand what a simple electronic module is, let alone a complex one. I am not proud of my ignorance in these matters, but I am not ashamed either: I am too old to understand these mysteries, and anyway I have better things to do with my time, such as cleaning my fingernails with a toothpick.

But — I did say that Mr Spokesman would not be brief — there were more incomprehensible explanations, one of these being:

All the particle experiments at the laboratory depend on the proton synchrotron, which accelerates particles to an initial speed, or energy level. They are then injected into larger accelerators where they are collided together to recreate the conditions in the very early stages of the universe.

And that is where I come back into the story: not, of course, depending on the proton synchrotron, much less accelerating particles to an initial speed, and by no means injecting anyone into larger accelerators where they go staggering about, colliding with anything that moves, and claiming that they have found the early stages of the universe. For as I grappled with the ungraspable, I knew that somewhere in that story there had to be a human being; and so it was.

Colleagues said the technician, who had been with the laboratory for 27 years, was tormented by his recent divorce.

And I told you that God was not mocked. Did you believe me?

The technician was a human being, not an accelerator, a proton or an electronic module; he felt, and his feelings were in his heart, where the pain of his divorce would continue to twist that heart for a long, long time, perhaps until his death. And as he writhed in the agony, he thought — poor devil — that he could assuage the pain by damaging the cold, lifeless, silent, ununderstanding, gleaming machines.

The next step is obvious, although those whose task is to pretend otherwise will squeal. Suppose that the tormented divorcé — a human being, remember — had turned his pain to real hate. A few switches changed, a few bits of steel shoved into delicate machinery, a few cables cut and rewired differently, and "the world's largest particle physics laboratory" might be the world's biggest junk-heap, or even the world's biggest mortuary. (There are 9,000 people working at the laboratory, 5,000 of them physicists.)

We shudder — at least I do — at the broken-hearted technician; but what if he decided to run a few lethal cables through my toaster? And you will find little comfort, even though some hilarity, in the next instalment, which sings the very same song. Meet now Mr Kevin D. Mitnick of San Francisco, or rather Mr Kevin D. Mitnick of the nearest jail.

It was as if the hacker was underscoring the larger meaning of what has been called the most notorious Internet crime spree yet: the vulnerability of any computer on the global Internet network, if a sophisticated computer criminal puts his mind to mischief.

"It was as if..." But it was: Kevin Mitnick is said by experts to be the greatest computer criminal since the computer was invented, and he doesn't take any money.

Stop and think about that, Mitnick. It is very clear, could clean out a thousand bank systems and retire

with countless billions of dollars, but he doesn't. Don't start the Robin Hood stuff, though: this man is a genius, but he is also a gigantic nuisance, and he could have been appallingly dangerous. He stole thousands of data files and at least 20,000 credit card numbers; he hacked into the US air defence system — and that was when he was still a teenager; he hacked into corporate trade secrets worth billions of dollars; he hacked into the electronic mail of computer security officers at MCI Communication, a telephone company, and the Digital Equipment Corporation, a computer maker; he got control of telephone switching centres, which enabled him to listen in on calls and to change the numbers of the people he didn't like. (On that last point, we must grant him at least a sense of humour.)

I say it again: God is not mocked. We have made a monster, and we do not know how to control it, but very soon it will be controlling us. No, I do not believe that the robots will come stamping along to take over. I don't even believe that we will find the machines more useful than we are ourselves, and if we do, we can always pull the plug out. The Mitnicks are not the monsters; they are not even the monsters' servants; but the story of Kevin Mitnick is going to be more vivid than anyone has understood. When the idea of the computer had been worked out, the experts said that to make it work seriously, the ware, soft and hard, would be so enormous that it would fill the Albert Hall, and now there are discs a few inches across that can recite the entire works of Shakespeare, to say nothing of the OED and Britannica.

We are all familiar with the cybermistake: press the wrong button and you have wiped out your blockbuster novel, or at least the date of your aunt's birthday. But these are trivialities, not long ago. Bill Gates, who more or less invented software and has more money than Fort Knox

and the Bank of England put together (that is, three-and-ninety pence from the Bank and the rest from Fort Knox), painted a picture of reality in only a few years from now, truly science-fiction. Every film ever made, he said, would be available to everyone; no one need go away, because there will be perfect replicas of everything in the world; all will be to hand with the touch of a button. But the bit that made me shiver was that within the giant fortress, all will have cards which will open the gates, doors, kitchens, bedrooms, garages, windows — but not all the cards will be a hierarchy, it seems, in Fortress Gates, and sooner or later there will be a similar set of steps on the Moon. (Ah, didn't I tell you that Gates has been bargaining for the Moon, and the deal is all but concluded?)

All nonsense; I don't believe that this picture will come to pass; and neither does anybody else in their right mind, though perhaps it might come true at least for a handful, most of them like Gates himself. That is just the top layer. I can't make the video work, and in a survey in the United States, one-third couldn't either. But we cannot leave it, smugly, there. Turn back to Kevin Mitnick. He is now behind bars, and by the look of things he will be staying there for a considerable time. He has been hailed and reviled as the genius of the computer, and genius he certainly is. But do you think that he is the only one? Or if there is only one, do you believe that from Mitnick's example there are not at this minute a dozen, a hundred, a thousand, emulating his talent?

Very well; only a few will turn out to have Mitnick's talent. Oh, yes? While we were giggling at Mitnick, weren't we forgetting the love-lorn technician in Geneva? How do you know that there aren't dozens of such technicians, and not a few lunatics among them? How do you know that among the runners-up there aren't at least half-a-dozen who could huff and puff and blow the house down?

Howard Rheingold is an American expert in all computer matters; he has written a book "about the social significance of computer networking". He says: "You walk a fine line between openness and total security. You have to be able to trust that your neighbours aren't going to look into your mailbox."

But perhaps you can't trust those neighbours. What then?

Philip Howard



As usage changes, new and ludicrous ideas come out of literary closets

Outing is in. And not merely the horrid thrill of the hunt, but as a shift in the language. It is becoming awkward to refer to an "outing" in its old sense of a jaunt to a gallery or a picnic without some risk of exciting sniggers.

To "out" has been used as a verb meaning to expel (or oust) since the laws of Etheled the Unready spoke of a man being "outed". The Wife of Bath came closer to its new sense of "to expose": "With daunger oute we al oure chaffare", by which she was being characterised as saying, "With economy we spread out all our merchandise." From Lady Macbeth's ineffectual detergent for removing spots to "Out, out brief candle!", Shakespeare made use of the Anglo-Saxon imperative — although when Prospero says to Miranda "Thou wast not out three years old", he is using "out" in an obsolete idiom, not referring to exposing the sins of infants before they had been outed from the age of innocence.

Despite its emphatic internal capital and its gasp-mark, Out-Rage! has no connection with either "out" or "rage". The name of Peter Tatchell's Marxist-like guerrillas makes a clever slogan but erroneous folk etymology. You might suppose that when rage gets into us we are enraged, and when it comes out we are outraged. Wrong. *Outrage* is an Anglicisation of the Old French *oultre*, and comes from the Latin *ultra*, "beyond", with the suffix -age to turn it into a noun, as in "carriage", "shortage" — or "outrage", the American neologism for an electricity failure. We may well feel rage about such an outrage as an outrage, but what "outrage" meant originally and etymologically was going over the top, like an Ultra.

The place to track such idioms is in the newspaper, the first draft of language as well as history. The problem is that without a good index, a newspaper dies daily. Samuel Palmer's *Index to The Times* from 1790 to 1905 is a standard reference tool, but more than 450 unaccumulated quarterly volumes, and the haphazardness of its headwords, make a hunt through its printed form laborious and frequently unsuccessful. Now that the index is on CD-Rom, the computer can dig out in a few seconds what might take months of what turning.

When Elizabeth Barrett Browning was on honeymoon in 1846, she wrote a letter home: "After two months of uninterrupted intercourse, he loves me better each day — and my health improves too!" Lexicographers can now track down a shift in idiomatic meaning of intercourse, which means that even so pure a poet as EBB would phrase her letter differently today. We might have guessed that Malthus seems to have been the first to give "intercourse" its sexual connotation, which has now swamped older meanings. But this Gresham's linguistic law of sexually suggestive meanings driving out innocent older ones is not going to apply to "out", which is too versatile a little word to be kidnapped for any one meaning.

More specialised words, though, can be completely taken over by a pungent new meaning. For example, if Hobbes were translating *The Iliad* today, he could not write, "His arrows clink as often as he jogs," without conjuring up an inappropriate vision of urban joggers in lying tracksuits. A line in even such a magical incantation as *Kubla Khan* can be weakened by idiom-slip. "As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing" has been weakened by the terminology of modern underwear, as well as by the now fading debasement of "fast" (meaning "not safe in taxis"). Even so poor a poet laureate as Alfred Austin might hear the modern inappropriateness of addressing his heart with the words "Thou little boulder, rest."

The classic line "ruined by changing idiom" is, "How brave the prospect of a bright backside." Henry Vaughan must have been unduly innocent, for when he wrote it "backside" was already being used as a gemelism for bum. It was too much for the Rev. H.F. Lyte, whose edition amended the last two words to "traversed plain". We shall not have to amend all previous literary injunctions to come out, come out, wherever you are: though technology makes such an exercise all too possible.

Private talks

THE BOYS at Winchester College may have had an early premonition of what was coming to Rupert Pennant-Rea, the Deputy Governor of the Bank of England who stepped down this week after reports of his affair with a journalist. Just a couple of weeks ago, Pennant-Rea gave a talk to a current affairs society at the college, in which he called for a privacy law to stop press intrusion.

An inky-fingered informant assures me that he was quite emphatic on the subject, and during his lecture to a group of sixth-formers (theme: Who runs the country?), he referred repeatedly to the press.

"He made it very clear that he would like to call for a privacy law to be introduced," says one of the audience. "But he didn't quote any specific examples."

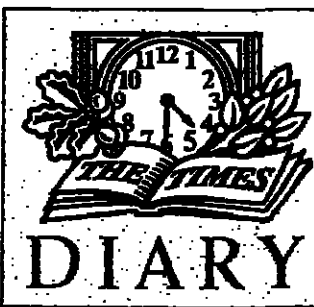
The college says that Pennant-Rea was invited to give the talk in his official capacity, but the former Editor of *The Economist* was surely aware that stories of his liaisons with Mary Ellen Synon had been hawked round Fleet Street for at least a year — and presumably knew all too well what journalists can do.

David Mellor may have avoided deselection as MP for Putney the other day, but his stock is still falling. A signed photograph of the fading charmer raised just 5p at a charity auction the other day in Mere, Wiltshire.

binds that tie

DESPITE frosty relations between Norman Lamont and the Government, his wife Rosemary is still

JUST PUTTING A NOTE OUT FOR THE MILKMAN



speaking to ministers. She managed to persuade every member of the Cabinet to part with a tie for an auction of celebrity neckwear at Bonhams in Knightsbridge the other day.

"My wife has done a very good job of collecting the ties," pursued the hapless former Chancellor. "Nonsense," she protested. "It was no trouble at all."

Grinding on

THE PRINCE of Wales had trouble with his period instruments at a reception in St James's Palace on Wednesday night, where musicians played and sang Shakespearean ditties. The do was for the Gdansk Theatre Foundation, which aims to build a £7 million replica of an ancient playhouse in the Polish port. It starred Sir Ian

McKellen, and was attended by the Countess of Buckinghamshire and Sir Peter Hall.

After the performance, the Prince admitted he was taken aback by the bulbous wooden tube one of the girls was blowing. "It's the first time I have seen someone playing something which looked to me like a giant pepper grinder," he said. The Prince was quite right: a bass recorder wouldn't look out of place in the hands of a flamboyant Italian waiter.

Little treasure

WITH a party sorely in need of funds and a Prime Minister desperately in need of friends, Conservatives are looking to some old hands for help. The Prime Minister recently invited the Tories' arch smoothie, Lord Parkinson, to become the party's treasurer — an offer he turned down sharply.

His friends say he refused because he is too busy: nine directorships take precedence over an unpaid job at Tory HQ.

Dry toast

CHINS and glasses were held high in the face of adversity in South Africa's Eastern Cape on Wednesday, when Her Majesty the Queen



Flour-power: but whose coat is Michael Jack wearing?

proposed a toast to her host at a banquet, one Raymond Mhlaba. In her excitement, she had failed to notice that all the glasses on the top table had long been drained, and the empty bottles removed. Sir Anthony knew the form, however. "He didn't hesitate," says a fellow guest. "He simply up, raised an empty glass to his lips and tipped it back, pretending to drink." And everyone followed suit.

White out

THE official government driver is a long-suffering individual. It turns out that the coat that Fisher-

ies Minister Michael Jack was wearing when he was flour-bombed by angry fishermen last Friday was not his own but his chauffeur's.

The smartly dressed minister smiled bravely through his ordeal as he went to open a new fish market on the Barbican in Plymouth. But in his rush to keep his appointment, he accidentally picked up the navy blue number belonging to Peter Williams, his driver. And since it was powdered in the line of duty, I understand the taxpayer will be picking up the cleaning bill.

P-H-S

مكتبة الامم المتحدة



THE WORLD IN HIS HANDS

Ruggiero is an unlikely general for a war that must be won

The tasks before the new World Trade Organisation are out of all proportion to its modest size. Strengthening the multilateral trading system sounds bland: but the political temperature rises fast once the politicians of the industrialised world begin to talk of cheap labour, unfair competition, threats to democratic institutions and other stresses and strains that trade policies inflict on their societies. The WTO could wield great influence over the way these problems are handled. It could be the first of a new generation of rule-based global organisations and a thriving forum for the orderly management of economic and technological change. It could also, all too easily, be sidelined into little more than a technical mechanism for patching up trade disputes.

The degree of influence the WTO comes to exercise will depend critically on the path set by its first Director-General. Renato Ruggiero, the Italian former diplomat chosen after nine months of singularly small-minded political manoeuvring, may yet surprise his reluctant backers. But he is handicapped at the start by the deals struck to end a deadlock that should never have been allowed to happen, and by the perception that he won by being the only horse left in the race. He will also have to free himself of the suspicion that the European Union expects him to defend its interests as a trading bloc.

The first and most obvious job ahead of Signor Ruggiero is to implement the Uruguay Round agreement on liberalising world trade — the accord which gave birth to the WTO. This task must include early settlement of the business it left unfinished — that of laying down international rules for trade in financial services. He must make the most of the WTO's tougher trade disciplines: it is vital that the new international disputes procedure works efficiently. Signor Ruggiero, a man whose entire career has been in fields where compromise is held to be a decisive virtue, may be just the man for this aspect of the job.

But if he confines himself to managing the

agenda he has inherited, he will fail to make the WTO the institution of consequence which it could be and which the world needs. A strategy worthy of the name will include countering the arguments for managed trade espoused by influential French and American politicians, and controlling a much more widely shared fear about the impact of currency fluctuations and free capital markets. Several Western governments are planning to use their political muscle to slow the pace of change, erecting new trade barriers in the name of protection for the environment and crusades for workers' rights. Various such "social clause" have found favour in Washington and Paris.

The Uruguay Round was a triumph of political and economic sense over increasingly emotive, and superficially compelling, arguments for protection. But the round was only a first cautious step towards opening up markets in agriculture and financial services. It took more than a decade to conclude because, just as formerly protectionist developing countries began to espouse open market systems, many Western governments began to sound the retreat.

Their leaders were beginning to contend with wider political pressures than the lobbies by uncompetitive sectors that are the traditional stuff of trade negotiations. Worries about the emergence of a new Western underclass, as companies and whole industries migrate to countries where labour is cheaper, are likely to intensify. Statistics belie the myth that the West is being outclassed by the dynamic Asian economies, but statistics have little bearing on political moods. America regained its position as the world's most competitive nation last year, bypassing Japan for the first time in eight years; but this has had almost no impact on national assumptions about American decline. As 2000 approaches, it will be harder than it has been for 50 years to win the argument that free trade is a game with prizes for everybody. Signor Ruggiero has slipped, almost by default, into one of the most demanding political jobs in the world.

PLAIN FRAUD

Juries need help: judges must see that they get it

A fraud trial, costing an estimated £2 million, has collapsed after six months at the Crown Court in Newport: the presiding judge ruled that the evidence was too difficult for the jury to understand. Judge Crowther described the evidence as "oppressive and unmanageable"; predictably, his decision has reopened the debate on whether fraud cases are suitable for juries.

The Roskill report, published in 1986, recommended that juries should not hear complicated fraud trials and that matters should instead be entrusted to a species of serious fraud tribunal. The Government rightly rejected this approach, and had impeccable constitutional reasons for doing so. As Walter Merricks of the Law Society, the lone dissenting voice in the report, wrote at the time, "the right of the citizen not to be liable to incarceration for a lengthy period other than on a jury verdict has become a civic right which should only be dislodged for good cause". The maximum sentence for conspiracy to defraud, it should be noted, is life imprisonment.

Few should dispute the importance to British society — and to our jurisprudence — of the institution of trial by jury which can be traced back to 1688 and beyond. In the face of such difficulties as those posed by the relentless complexity of modern fraud trials, the best response is not to jettison juries but to make the task of jurors more simple. Yet almost nothing has been done since the rejection of the Roskill report to ensure that a

system designed for very different trials is not tested to breaking point.

Complex evidence is not the preserve of fraud trials alone. Arcane medical and forensic evidence is often given in rape cases, for example; and the distinction between murder and manslaughter can turn on abstruse psychological material. In the case of serious fraud it is equally the task of the prosecuting lawyers to reduce the complexity to a comprehensible level. The legal system, and those involved in the "trial industry", should examine the ways in which people today absorb ordinary information. They do not do so from speeches of interminable length, laced with jargon, technicality and code-words; they respond, however, to audiovisual sources. Our courts, unimaginative and Luddite in equal measure, are only just beginning to respond to the call of technology.

As Judge May, who last year presided over a £43 million mortgage fraud trial, has argued, the ability of jurors to follow complex cases would be enhanced if the evidence were computerised, and if modern techniques of presentation were adopted. The problem with fraud trials at present is that there is no pressure on lawyers to translate issues for the benefit of the jury, and that they are open-ended in terms of both cost and time. The case for reform is as unanswerable as that for the retention of trial by jury. The fault lies not with our jurors, but with those who keep them in the dark.

ENGLISH ABROAD

A truly global language will take many forms

The Prince of Wales's claim yesterday that American English has a "very corrupting" effect upon the language will be applauded by many who treasure our mother tongue, particularly by parents who deplore the impact of American television upon their children's grasp of grammar. It is right that Prince Charles's questions are being posed at this moment in the nation's history. Whatever is said about Britain's declining influence in the world, the linguistic hegemony of English is growing increasingly strong. In more than 70 countries, it is already an official or semi-official language; 70 per cent of the world's mail is written in English, which is the first language of more than 350 million people. The cultural reach of the BBC World Service and the British Council is remarkable. If there is such a thing as the global village, then English is its favoured means of communication.

The dominance of English today, however, is not of the same character as it was during the colonial era. The language is spreading for reasons that are more pragmatic and subtle than in the past. The citizens of other countries are keen to speak a tongue which will assist them in business, pleasure and international communication. To learn English is no longer to submit to a series of cultural norms but to share in a global lingua franca. It is inevitable that the language will adapt accordingly.

In Britain — and especially in British schools — the defence of standard English is to be warmly applauded. But our approach to English as a global force should be more

nuanced. The infectiousness of the language reflects its adaptability and flexibility. In comparison to French or German, English is a permeable language, open to new influences and usages. This is one of its traditional strengths as an international language.

Evolution and corruption are not the same thing. To reject American English as a force for ill seems odd in the century of Saul Bellow, Scott Fitzgerald, J. D. Salinger and Tom Wolfe. Many would now say that the American novel is in better shape than its British counterpart. That is a matter for debate. What is undeniable is that recent fiction in this country has been profoundly influenced by writing in America. Martin Amis, whose work has been much celebrated this week, owes more to Bellow and Nabokov than to his immediate predecessors in Britain.

Much of the best writing of recent years has fused different forms of English. Toni Morrison would not write novels of such power had she not so effectively captured the language of the American black community; one of Salman Rushdie's achievements has been to marry the richness of Indian English with the traditional forms of the Western novel. Such experiments have enriched rather than damaged the language. Prince Charles is right to champion high standards in the use of English. It does not follow that we should resist every linguistic innovation or confuse the development of the language on the global stage with its gradual destruction.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Attempts to bolster faith in the criminal justice system

From Sir Paul Condon,
Commissioner of the
Metropolitan Police

Sir, "Sir Paul is reported as saying", writes Roger Ede, Secretary of the Law Society's Criminal Law Committee ("Why shouldn't a client stay silent?" Law, March 21), "that unless the rules are changed some 'street cops' are at risk of bending evidence to convict people they are certain are guilty. Does he mean that these officers are entitled to dispense their own justice?"

I mean no such thing. At no time, ever, is it right for a police officer to be less than totally honest, in court or elsewhere, or to fabricate evidence. I would not condone any such action and I have never indicated otherwise.

In a very long and wide-ranging interview published in *The Guardian* on March 11, I spoke of my belief in a totally ethical police service that recruits some of the best people in the country and operates to the highest ethical standards.

The reporter asked me a direct question: was there a risk, if there were not changes to the criminal justice system, of "noble cause corruption"? I believe that phrase was first used in the United States. It refers, as I understand it, to the alleged fabrication of evidence by police officers because they believe a suspect to be guilty.

My reply to the reporter was an affirmation of the Met's determination to hold the line on ethical standards, despite officers' frustrations when they are dealing daily with victims, many of whom feel that the criminal justice system is letting them down. I believe we now have the most ethical police service we have ever had.

Yours sincerely,
PAUL CONDON,
Commissioner,
Metropolitan Police Service,
New Scotland Yard,
Broadway, SW1,
March 21.

From the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police

Sir, Roger Ede seems to view the new law on the "right to silence" as a threat to the protection from the police currently enjoyed by suspects.

In fact, the change in the law gives the police no additional powers. If per-

mits a court to take account of a defendant's refusal to explain facts which, to a reasonable person, would appear incriminating. This should aid the search for truth and thus assist both victims of crime and the community who depend on the trial system to identify and deal with offenders.

The Law Society's advice to solicitors on this new law tells them how to construct an excuse for their clients' silence which will minimise the risk of any adverse inference being drawn from it at court. This will be of substantially more use to the guilty than to the innocent.

The Law Society is clearly content to assist its members in undermining the spirit of the law, while in the same breath attacking the Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police for even daring to mention the dangers of "noble cause corruption".

The public pays for our judicial system, and should expect all its practitioners to be accountable. Mr Ede's article confirms that a solicitor's accountability is solely to his client — not to the court, not to society, and not to the truth.

While this situation remains, miscarriages of justice — the guilty going free — will continue to occur, and public confidence in the legal system will continue to decline.

Yours faithfully,
CHARLES POLLARD,
Chief Constable,
Thames Valley Police,
Kidlington, Oxfordshire,
March 22.

From Sir Robert Bunyard

Sir, In rebuilding senior police officers for losing faith in criminal justice, the Secretary of the Law Society's Criminal Law Committee refers to the Royal Commission on Criminal Justice in support of his statement that the criminal justice system of England and Wales "is one of which we can all be proud".

As a member of that Royal Commission I really must urge him to study its report a little more closely. It contains 352 recommendations for improving our criminal justice system and producing an equitable balance between prosecution and defence. Many of them require changes on the

part of the legal professions. When those recommendations have been implemented, then we might have a system of which we can all be proud.

Yours faithfully,
ROBERT BUNYARD,
Commandant, Police Staff
College, 1988-93,
Belmans,
Mounthill Avenue, Springfield,
Chelmsford, Essex,
March 21.

From Mr John Butler

Sir, Roger Ede's article shows how far the Law Society's perception of justice and the effectiveness of our system is estranged from that of the public.

Mr Ede should not think that it is just senior police officers who have "lost faith" in the criminal justice system. The public knows that lawyers are bent on sustaining the rule of "law"; after all, it is their livelihood.

Most ordinary people believe that the legal system has far more concern for the welfare of criminals than for the victims of crime. The police have no need "to shift the blame on to the lawyers". The public already puts the blame there.

Yours truly,
JOHN BUTLER,
9 Cottenham Drive,
Wimbledon, SW20,
March 21.

From Mr Andrew Dyke

Sir, I was astonished to read that the Law Society is advising solicitors to acquiesce in the silence of their guilty clients (report, March 14). What has happened to the concept that solicitors are officers of the court?

Professional standards of ethics and integrity require that solicitors display a loyalty to society which transcends their duty to their client — particularly one who has admitted his or her guilt.

If the Law Society wishes to retain both its monopoly of professional regulation and its public esteem then it should reverse this disgraceful policy immediately.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW DYKE,
40 Compton Road,
Winchmore Hill, N21,
March 15.

Threat to fabric of Thames Tunnel

From Mr Alan Prasuhn

Sir, The threatened concreting of the interior of the Thames Tunnel (letter, March 17) would be tragic. Not only is the Thames Tunnel the first subaqueous tunnel in the world; it is also a true monument to heroic civil engineering. It must remain as a tribute to the outstanding contributions of both the Brunels' contributions to British and world-wide civil engineering.

In 1993 the American Society of Civil Engineers joined with the British Institution of Civil Engineers to jointly recognize the Thames Tunnel as an international historic civil engineering landmark, one of only 19 civil engineering projects to be so designated. In worldwide importance it is in the top rank, along with the Iron Bridge at Telford. All possible efforts should be made to preserve its structural and architectural integrity.

Sincerely,
ALAN PRASUHN
(Chairman, Committee on History and Historic Heritage),
American Society of Civil Engineers,
345 East 47th Street,
New York 10017-2398,
March 18.

From Professor R. Angus Buchanan

Sir, I was alarmed to learn that London Underground intends to obliterate the brick lining of the Thames Tunnel.

Certainly public safety must have absolute priority in matters of this nature, but if the brickwork of the tunnel lining has deteriorated so much that radical repair is necessary, it is difficult to believe that a concrete covering will be sufficient to protect it. In such a situation it would be safer to construct a new tunnel for the railway and allow the Brunel construction to be restored as a foot-tunnel and attract the tourist and heritage attention which it undoubtedly deserves.

May we hope that the planners will reconsider this hasty and ill-considered decision?

Yours faithfully,
R. A. BUCHANAN,
Centre for the History of Technology,
University of Bath,
Claverton Down, Bath, Avon,
March 20.

Suitable education

From Mr Roger Allen

Sir, Over the last twenty years or so the debate over whether educational standards have risen or fallen has raged with little change in the views of either side. Only on rare occasions has anyone considered the appropriateness of secondary education to the needs of commerce.

You report (March 17) that the Panasonic company in Wales had interviewed 200 young people of around 16 years of age with a view to employment. Only three were considered to have the necessary educational standard in basic maths and general science to be worthy of employment.

I refuse to believe that the inherent ability of the young people of Wales is so low that only some 4 per cent are capable of reaching the educational standards set by Panasonic. This therefore leaves both the method of education and the goal of the educationist in question.

Perhaps one, or more, of your educationist readers would care to offer some explanation as to why the young people of Wales have not been educated to a standard in keeping with employers' needs such that they are denied employment.

Yours faithfully,
ROGER ALLEN,
5 Victoria Gardens, Marlow Road,
High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire,
March 18.

Words perfect

From His Honour Peter Mason, QC

Sir, I agree with Mr Richard Thomas (letter, March 20) that on occasions parliamentary draftsmen are (or used to be) masters of lucidity.

Who, for example, could beat section 172 (1) Income Tax Act 1952: "short lease" means a lease which is not a long lease?

Yours faithfully,
PETER MASON,
11 King's Bench Walk,
Temple, EC4,
March 20.

From Mr T. F. Nolf

Sir, Mr Thomas draws attention to a brief section of an Act of Parliament but some Scots legislation has been quite a bit terser than that. In 1621 the Scots Parliament passed a Game Act which reads in its entirety as follows: "No man shall hunt or hawk at any time hereafter who hath not a plough of land in heritage, under paine of One Hundred Pounds: Ordaines His Majesty to have the one halfe of the penaltie of the contravention of this present Act and the Informer to have the other halfe."

As criminal legislation goes, this is pretty good: it is concise, crystal-clear and entirely free from loopholes.

Yours sincerely,
T. NOLF,
6c Dunbar Street, Aberdeen,
March 20.

Letters should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Business and charity

From Miss Caroline Beer

Sir, Richard Radcliffe is absolutely right (letter, March 17): we should certainly not only support those charities which are already well established. However, bearing in mind that the sector is already over-stretched, where can that support come from?

Businesses working with Business in the Community encourage their staff to share skills with their local communities. For example, NatWest offers grants and training to its staff who act as school governors, and Marks and Spencer and TSB use 100-hour community assignments as part of their staff development.

The employee benefits in terms of skills and confidence, the employer benefits in terms of PR and staff morale and motivation, and the community gets the expertise and energy of someone from the business sector.

A large proportion of company-supported volunteering concerns the transfer of skills into the community and not just fundraising. Money is important; but, as we all know, give a man a fish and you feed him for a day, teach a man to fish and you feed him for life.

Yours faithfully,
CAROLINE BEER
(Campaign Manager, Employees in the Community Campaign),
Business in the Community,
8 Stratton Street, W1,
March 17.

Ban on landmines

From Mrs D. M. Forbes

Sir, I am grateful to Mr Rae McGrath (letter, March 21) for confirming that there is no such thing as a "non-detectable" mine, for if there were it would be the ultimate horror.

However, the HB876 comes remarkably close to this and one would hope that it would be banned not only from export but from manufacture. Since the manufacturers classify it as a mine one must ask why the DTI do not. Perhaps to prevent its export being banned by the minister?

Yours faithfully,
DOROTHY FORBES,
59 Wheelers Lane,
Kings Heath, Birmingham B13,
March 21.

Coach vs train

From Mr Warwick Hillman

Sir, Barry S. Doe's strictures (letter, March 18) on Matthew Parris's comparisons of coach and rail travel are inaccurate both on matters of fares and frequency.

Since January 30 the most expensive return coach fare from London to Chesterfield has been £15, the cheapest £10. There are currently eight coaches in each direction, not six as Mr Doe claims.

Yours faithfully,
WARWICK HILLMAN
(Managing Director),
Victoria Coach Station,
164 Buckingham Palace Road, SW1.

Pennant-Rea's Bank departure

From Mr Andrew Knight

Sir, Please allow me to make two notes for the history books about Mr Rupert Pennant-Rea (letters, March 23) and Mrs Sarah Hogg (now Baroness Hogg).

When Mr Pennant-Rea came to *The Economist* from the Bank of England in 1977, Mrs Hogg was but recently appointed, very young, to her own job as economics editor. Her strengths, then, were in social policy and micro-economics. Mrs Hogg was — not surprisingly — defensive about a macro-economist from the Bank, with little journalistic experience, being catapulted on to the staff to back her up; but it was not easy for anybody to resist the trial piece that Mr Pennant-Rea sent in.

They shared an office. Mrs Hogg learnt her macro-economics from Mr Pennant-Rea and from the man we all took so much from, the then deputy editor Mr Norman Macrae. For his part, Mr Pennant-Rea benefited vastly also from Mr Macrae, but particularly from Mrs Hogg's capacious mind and appetite for detail.

Even their methods of work were opposite and complementary — Mrs Hogg pressing against every deadline, Mr Pennant-Rea turning up early in the morning with his copy in pristine longhand often a day earlier than it was needed.

Second note. It was reported on Wednesday that Mrs Hogg recommended Mr Pennant-Rea to be Editor of *The Economist* in 1986. In fact she was one of his principal competitors

Hidden meaning

From Mr Stephen White

Sir, I note the Welsh Secretary will not sign anything in Welsh for fear of what he might be subscribing (*Diary*, March 15).

When Fitzjames Stephen first came on circuit in Wales in 1884 he wrote from Caernarvon to a friend:

"When Bramwell was judging here, one of the counsel spoke to the jury in Welsh, and told them not to mind what the old man in the red gown told them, he was only a Saxon oppressor, come to trouble the good old Welsh laws and customs."

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN WHITE,
Cardiff Law School,
University of Wales, Law Building,
Museum Avenue, Cardiff,
March 17.

Season's cheer

From Mr A. D. Melville

Sir, The stamp on a letter received today was entitled "Springtime". It appears to depict a gloomy old fossil. Is the lack of feel-good factor now official?

Yours etc,
A. D. MELVILLE,
8 Sunbury Court,
Sunbury Road,
Eton, Windsor, Berkshire,
March 15.

Medicine exports

From the Director-General of the
Association of the British
Pharmaceutical Industry

Sir, The article by Professor Sir David Weatherall, "Science puts on a revealing show" (*Mind and Matter*, March 20), reminds us of the potential that the revolution in human genetics can bring to the health of our nation. We often hear that Britain is good at discovery but not at implementation.

The outstanding success of British biomedical and clinical research has resulted in Britain occupying a leading position in world terms as a fruitful source of both discovery and development of new medicines.

Ten of the 35 best-selling medicines in the world were discovered and/or developed by UK pharmaceutical companies.

Furthermore, the fact that annual exports from the British pharmaceutical industry in 1994 are worth £3.6 billion is evidence that others know the value of these medicines to the health of their own people. Indeed, the industry is now earning about £2 billion a year for the economy in trade surplus.

Yours faithfully,
TREVOR M. JONES,
Director-General,
The Association of the British
Pharmaceutical Industry,
12 Whitehall, SW1,
March 22.

OBITUARIES

ROBIN JACQUES

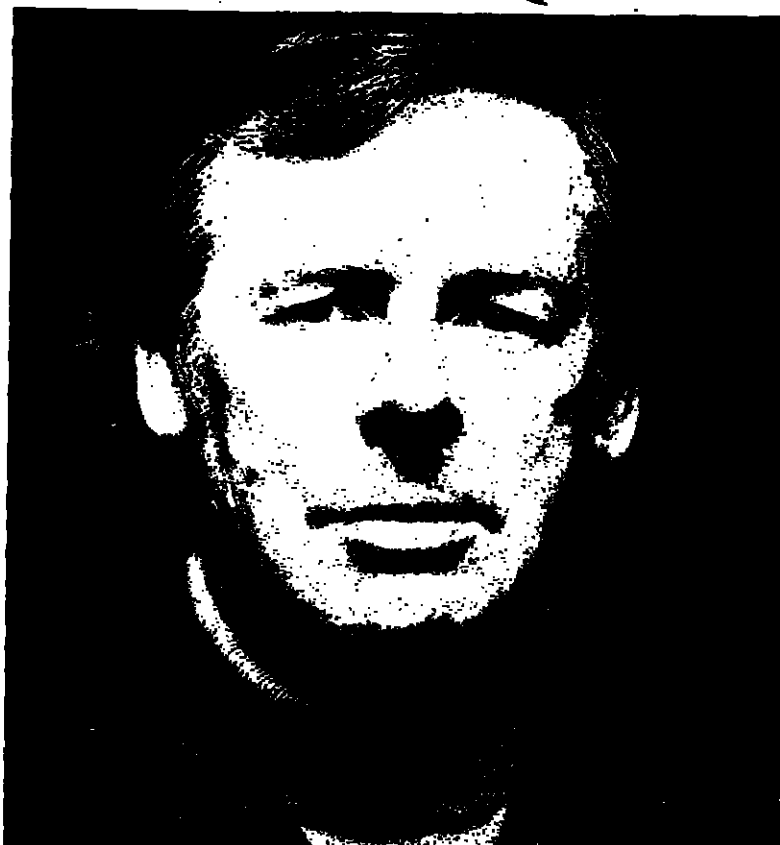
Robin Jacques, illustrator, died on March 18 aged 74. He was born on March 27, 1920.

ROBIN JACQUES was one of the outstanding pen-and-ink illustrators of his generation. He stood in a tradition of meticulous figurative drawing stretching back to the 19th-century masters George Cruikshank, Richard Doyle and Sir John Tenniel, and more recently to the artist Eric Fraser. He had the sort of detailed style suited to the diverse demands of children's books, folio editions of 19th-century novels, and publications such as *Radio Times*, *Punch*, *The Listener* and *House and Gardens*.

Jacques was a stickler for such historical detail as the correct epaulettes on a military uniform. But editors knew they could rely on him not only for the quality of his work, but for the consistency with which he met a tight deadline. A newspaper's art director might commission a work for that night's edition at midday, and Jacques would normally return the finished article by early afternoon. He worked for all the national papers, including illustrations of birds for *The Times*'s "Feather Report". But magazine work, which allowed him marginally more time for his well-researched style, was probably more congenial to him.

He was one of the last great illustrators to be completely self-taught. Born in the King's Road, London, Robin Jacques was the son of a professional soldier who was later a test pilot in the Royal Flying Corps during the First World War. His father was killed in a flying accident in 1922 and Robin and his sister Hattie — who later became the actress — went to live with their maternal grandparents who owned a shop. The young Jacques was educated at the Royal Masonic School, Bushey.

He got his passion for historic illustration by attending such films as *Robin Hood* and then turning to the original, often gorgeously illustrated, editions of the stories in the school library. At the age of 15 he left school and was apprenticed to a London advertising agency, looking after the needs of the senior artists. There he learnt about layout and lettering and trained himself as a draughtsman during the evening by copying from anatomical books. It was a skill which subsequently stood him in good stead



Jacques and an illustration for a Dickens short story

as, having mastered the art of figurative drawing from memory, he had no need of props or models. But Jacques found agency work dull and left to spend several months as a barman in Kilburn. The coarse features of the heavy drinkers he met there could later be discerned in some of his own characters' faces.

In 1941 he joined the Royal Engineers and later served in France, The Netherlands and Germany. He was the most unworldly of soldiers and eventually he was found a more suitable occupation drawing maps. After the war he moved briefly to Paris to illustrate Patrick Leigh Fermor's *The Violins of Saint Jacques*, for the magazine *Realités*. He returned to London to become art director of the *Strand* magazine from 1948 to 1951.

At the same time his career as an illustrator was beginning to flourish. His connection with the *Radio Times* stretched back to before the war but only really took off afterwards. The

Radio Times was then a magazine with one of the boldest art commissioning policies, and was a testing ground for much young talent. Working under the art editor Douglas Williams, Jacques came to specialise in military and costume drawings. One of his earliest commissions was for T. H. White's *The Sword in the Stone*. Later there was a series of commissions for radio productions of Shakespeare's plays. For the first of these, *The Tempest*, Jacques imagined Prospero as a robust father-figure rather than as the usual aesthete and intellectual.

For many years he drew the headings and borders which decorated the margins of the day's programmes. The contents of each varied with the season, Christmas proving a more fruitful time for design elements, he found, than Easter.

His connection with *Radio Times* stretched until 1981, by which time artwork had been all but replaced by photographic stills.

In the 1960s Jacques lived in France, and illustrated the first of his books for the Folio Society, *Vanity Fair* (1963). There followed *Middlemarch* (1972), *The Europeans* (1982) and *Portrait of a Lady* (1994). For other publishers, he illustrated James Joyce's *Dubliners* (1954) and *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1955).

His minute observation of the oddities and grotesqueries of life made him a natural choice to illustrate children's books. He enjoyed a fruitful collaboration with Ruth Manning-Sanders, illustrating 21 of her fairy-tale books. Children particularly appreciated the amount of detail packed into a space no bigger than a postage stamp.

Jacques was an able raconteur and a good listener. He had an unassuming, throwaway wit, very like that of his friend, brother-in-law and fellow jazz enthusiast, the actor John Le Mesurier.

He was married three times. His first wife, Patricia Bamford, predeceased him, as did his second, Azenta van der Merwe. His third marriage to Alexandra Mann ended in divorce. He is survived by his partner for the past 23 years, Anne Valery, and by a son of the first marriage.

DAVIE COOPER

Davie Cooper, Scottish international footballer, died yesterday in hospital in Glasgow after a brain haemorrhage aged 39. He was born on February 25, 1956.

DAVIE COOPER was an extraordinarily gifted winger whose joy in his sport itself delighted spectators over the 21 years he spent with Clydebank, Rangers, Motherwell and, once again, Clydebank. His talent made success inevitable, but the abundance of medals was peripheral to Cooper's true achievement. In an era of trite talk about the "hunger" of players for fame and glory, his tastes were endearingly idiosyncratic.

Cooper had to be cajoled into fame. He relished the competition and camaraderie of football, but showed few signs of overt ambition. Clydebank had to struggle to persuade him to take an interest in turning professional. When he did join them, in 1974, he received a signing-on fee of just £200, which was composed of the takings from the one-arm bandits in Clydebank's social club.

There were no signs that he had any craving for greater wealth. With the assistance of his relaxed flair, Clydebank had by 1977 climbed from the second to the premier division of the Scottish League, and an orthodox footballer would have been quivering with desire for advancement. Cooper, though, was utterly content at Kilbowie Park and only acceded to a transfer because it was Rangers, his boyhood heroes, who were ready to pay £100,000 for him.

With them he won three championships, three Scottish Cups, and seven League Cups. Despite those achievements, the indelible memories stem from moments of pure accomplishment rather than the results to which they may have contributed. His was a classical style which made him perhaps the last in the long line of Scottish wingers who succeeded through deftness and trickery.

Cooper was a footballer of devastating nuances. A minute change of pace, a small adjustment in balance or a faint nudge of the ball would leave opponents hugely envious. He thrived on the individual contest with a de-



fender which can determine this team game. Matches with Celtic particularly appealed to him, and Cooper loved to infuriate the followers of Rangers' great adversaries, often choosing to conduct his warm-up directly in front of them.

This behaviour, however, was more tease than taunt, even if the Celtic supporters did miss the humour. Cooper's personality only gradually became public knowledge. In his early days with Rangers, he was often accused of truculence, but it may have been that the press confused a reluctance to speak to journalists with a more widespread taciturnity.

Cooper's true, affable temperament became apparent in later years, when he provided good-humoured and expert analysis for Scottish Television's football coverage. He was unassuming, appreciating an ordinary existence in which afternoons would generally include a trip to the bookmakers.

His footballing peers believed he possessed the ability to have flourished in Italy where he could have become a millionaire.

That sort of enterprise, however, was utterly alien to his character. Indifference to the slog and tactical constraint of international football ensured that he made a mere 22 appearances for Scotland. He did, however, convert the penalty against Wales which clinched Scotland's place in the 1986 World Cup.

Eventually people learnt to appreciate the winger on his own, unassuming terms. Those who love football relished the moments of masterful self-expression. The exquisitely struck free-kick with which he scored for Rangers against Aberdeen in the 1987 League Cup final was a perfect reminder of the close relationship between finesse and power. Cooper's effectiveness waned only slowly, and he helped Motherwell, whom he joined in 1989, to win the 1991 Scottish Cup.

He had returned to Clydebank in 1993, but intended to retire this summer. He collapsed while filming a coaching programme for Scottish Television.

Cooper, who was divorced from his first wife, Elizabeth, and her daughter,

GEORGE SZPIRO

George Szpiro, merchant banker, died on March 14 in London aged 88. He was born in Butrimonis, Lithuania, on August 1, 1906.

GEORGE SZPIRO was a refugee from Eastern Europe who built up single-handedly in London a small but highly respected merchant bank, Winturst.

A few months before he died, *The Sunday Times* hailed him as the oldest working chairman of a public

company in the United Kingdom.

Lithuania was an unsettled and dangerous place for a Jewish family before the First World War, and after his birth Szpiro's family moved to Bialystok in Poland, which proved to be not much better. He went to school there, but it was difficult for him to get on to the higher rungs of education. So he left the family home when he was 20 and took a master's degree in political science and economics at Liège University.

In 1933 he came to Britain. Subsequently he said he owed all he had achieved to the unprejudiced social and political climate in his adopted country. But it was also due to his impeccable commercial flair and his scrupulous dealing.

He became an agent financing textiles for his father, who was by now in Shanghai, and with this experience behind him soon founded his own company, Winturst Securities, eventually financing international trade on a global scale. This business evolved into a fully-fledged merchant bank, Winturst, which went public in 1970. He steered the bank successfully through the financial turbulence of the mid-1970s and the early 1980s, and he was still its chairman at his death.

Meanwhile, in 1940, he had made a romantic marriage. At the beginning of that year, his wife-to-be, Halina, was a refugee from Poland living in a flat with 20 others in Bucharest. One day there was a knock at the door, and a representative of the British Embassy was found standing there with a bunch of red roses and a proposal of marriage from Szpiro, who had already met her in Warsaw before the war. He had also arranged a visa for her, and she escaped to Britain before Romania entered the war.

In recent years, their dinner parties at their house in Belgrave were memorable occasions. City businessmen and diplomats mingled with writers and artists, under the benign influence of Halina's high spirits and George's quiet courtesy.

He leaves his wife and a son, Richard, who is managing director of Winturst — a fact which gave his father great satisfaction.

WILLIAM FOWLER

William Alfred Fowler, astrophysicist and winner of the Nobel Prize in Physics, died of kidney failure in Pasadena, California, on March 14 aged 83. He was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, on August 9, 1911.



STARDUST was the essence of William Fowler's life and work. He believed, and he proved to the satisfaction of most other scientists, that it formed the basis of virtually every element found in the universe, including those that make up human beings. "All of us," he once said, "are truly and literally a little bit of stardust."

In a career that lasted for more than six decades, Fowler worked consistently at the forefront of cosmic issues in physics and cosmology, devising a complete theory to explain the formation of chemical elements through the process of stellar evolution. Working in collaboration with the British astronomer Fred Hoyle, and with British physicist Margaret and Geoffrey Burbidge, whom he met while serving as a Fulbright lecturer at Cambridge University, Fowler produced a seminal paper on his theory in 1957 entitled *Synthesis of the Elements in Stars*. It described how, in a star like the Sun, two hydrogen nuclei, or protons, combine to create the next heavier element, helium, thus generating a lot of energy.

Over time, he theorised, more and heavier elements are produced until, after millions of years, the star finally explodes into a supernova, scattering its substance across the universe. The crucial importance of Fowler's discovery, which led to the foundation of the new field of nuclear astrophysics, was finally acknowledged in 1983, when he shared the Nobel Prize in Physics with Subrahmanyan Chandrasekhar of the University of Chicago.

Much of his work was done at the Kellogg Radiation Laboratory at the California Institute of Technology, where he joined the faculty after gaining his doctorate in 1936. The laboratory was named after the breakfast cereal magnate.

and Fowler was once asked by an elderly woman what he did there. He explained, in technical terms.

"Young man," she said, "I still don't know what you do."

"Well, I bust atoms and study how things explode," Fowler replied.

"Oh," said the woman, now satisfied. "You puff rice!" During the Second World War, before he began his research into the origins of the universe, Fowler had been concerned with smaller explosions. He worked on defence projects, particularly the design of proximity fuses for anti-aircraft shells. Later he helped to produce components for the atomic bomb.

The author of more than 180 scientific articles, Fowler again co-operated with Hoyle in 1965 to publish the book *Nucleosynthesis in Massive Stars and Supernovae*, which contained their latest research findings. Two years later he published *Nuclear Astrophysics*.

Among his many awards were the National Medal of Science, given by President Ford in 1974, and the Legion d'Honneur presented by President Mitterrand in 1989. He was elected to the US National Academy of Sciences in 1956, and also served on the National Science Board.

Widowed in 1988, William Fowler is survived by his second wife, Mary, and by two daughters.

PERSONAL COLUMN

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAT BALDU, unattended problem, ring M.L. on 30022 897888

YOUR WILL

If you are making your will, please call us. We care for all ex-service men and women who have lost limbs in the service of their country. Enquiries to: The Chairman, British Legion Ex-Services Men's Association, c/o National Bank plc, 60 West Strand, London EC4A 3DF.

HELPING HOUSE THE HOMELESS

Donations are urgently needed to enable us to buy more houses and repair those in urgent need of support. Help us face the problems of homelessness by donating to the Church Housing Trust, c/o a local branch of your bank. Details from: CHURCH HOUSING TRUST, 79-79 West Houndsditch, London E14 7ET.

EX-SERVICES MENTAL WELFARE SOCIETY

We honour those who gave their lives for our country. But what of those who shared the same horrors and survived... their minds shattered. The Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society carries on the work of the Ex-Services Men's Association, c/o National Bank plc, 60 West Strand, London EC4A 3DF. A donation now or a legacy later will help those who have given their most precious gift to the world. COMBAT STRESS, Ex-Services Mental Welfare Society, 79-79 West Houndsditch, London E14 7ET. Tel: 01-493 1500.

Old and Fit NOT Old and Sick

Help us make old and fit a fact of life. A donation now and a legacy later, please. RESEARCH INTO AGEING, Dept. T, 100, Strand, London WC2R 0AL. (Involvement in Research for Age Research)

How near we are to the cure...

...depends on you. LEUKAEMIA RESEARCH FUND, 43 Great Ormond Street, London WC1N 3JH. Tel: 01-493 0381. (Secretary: Dr. Margaret Hildes)

DIALYSIS AND TRANSPLANTATION THEIR ONLY HOPE

Life saving treatments to kidney and heart patients. Please help us grant a reprieve for some of them this year. Donations to: THE BRITISH KIDNEY PATIENT ASSOCIATION, London, N16 9JL.

TIGERS EXTINCT?

Yes, the magnificent wild tiger could be extinct in the wild in a few short years unless immediate action is taken to prevent the current tiger crisis turning into an international tragedy. The Tiger Trust is the only organisation in the world exclusively fighting to save the majestic wild tiger from extinction. To find out more, or to make an immediate donation write to: THE TIGER TRUST, Chevington, BSE, Suffolk IP29 5RG. Reg. Charity No. 1014670.

March 25th - 26th Hilton Olympia

FIRST IRAN TOURISM EXHIBITION. An exotic show featuring traditional live music for lovers of original antiquity and fresh discoveries. This unique opportunity views ancient wonders of Persia and includes arts & crafts. ADMISSION FREE. HILTON OLYMPIA. For More Details Tel: 071 937 2288 / Fax: 071 937 6868.

PLEASE HELP US TO HELP THOSE FOR WHOM THE TRIUMPHS OF RESEARCH WILL COME TOO LATE AND WHO NEED OUR HELP NOW

Your donation, large or small, is urgently needed and please remember us in your will. The British Kidney Patient Association, London, N16 9JL. Tel: 01-493 0381. Reg. Charity No. 270288.

SPONSOR A GURKHA FAMILY

TOO OLD TO FIGHT - TOO PROUD TO ASK. The Gurkhas have faithfully served the British Crown since 1815 and in two World Wars - winning 13 Victoria Crosses for conspicuous bravery. Considered among the finest fighting forces in the world, Gurkhas return home to Nepal - one of the poorest countries in the world where their services are not appreciated. It is a struggle to meet especially for those who have been overseas or too old to work. Please help with a donation now and a legacy later.

THEY HAVE FOUGHT FOR BRITAIN SINCE 1815. NOW, HELP THEM TO FIGHT THE WAR OF THEIR LIVES. Gurkha Welfare Trust, 100, Strand, London WC2R 0AL. Tel: 01-493 1500. Reg. Charity No. 1014670.

HAVE YOU THOUGHT OF LEAVING US SOME OF YOUR NEST EGG?

By remembering us in your will, you'll be remembering the whole RAF family. Not just aircrew, but ground staff, too. Serving RAF members, as well as ex-RAF. Their spouses and their dependant children. Every year more and more people urgently need our help. Please help ensure that we are always there to take them under our wing by making a donation now and by remembering us in your will. The Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, 100, Strand, London WC2R 0AL. Tel: 01-493 1500.

WELLINGTON WAS RIGHT.

Some of the famous newspapers, we find, have taken upon themselves not to blame, but to abuse the Duke of Wellington, because of his having sought from Lord Winchilsea the reparation usual amongst gentlemen for the offence which was recently, and as the noble Earl has since acknowledged, inadvertently given him in his Grace. Entertaining, as we do, a most sincere and anxious wish rather to heal completely, than in the slightest degree to re-open or irritate, any uneasy feeling which may have been connected with the late occurrences, we shall take no further notice of the animadversion cast upon the Duke of Wellington's part in them than seems absolutely indispensable to common justice. It would no doubt be a convenience to gentlemen who have strong appetites for stigmatising their political adversaries, if they were suffered to vent their violence, whenever and to whatever extent they might think proper, with impunity. There is nothing easier than to write common-places against duelling, and throw dirt at such men as the Duke of Wellington, for having lent their sanctions to a usage "so barbarous and unbecoming." Few persons, perhaps, will venture to defend, by abstract arguments, a proceeding which

ON THIS DAY

March 24 1829

WELLINGTON'S REPLY TO A CHARGE OF HYPOCRISY

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THE TIMES

BUSINESS EDITOR Lindsay Cook

FRIDAY MARCH 24 1995

Barings inquiry team to fly to Far East

By ROBERT MILLER

THREE senior officers from the Serious Fraud Office involved in the Barings investigation are to fly to Singapore early next week.

The three, comprising two fraud squad detectives and a lawyer, will liaise with the Singaporean authorities over their investigation into Barings and in particular the role played by Nick Leeson, the bank's futures trader blamed for the collapse.

Mr Leeson is currently being held in custody in Frankfurt from where he is fighting extradition proceedings to Singapore. The Singapore Commercial Affairs Department has alleged that Mr Leeson forged two documents to conceal losses of some £50 million arising from trading in derivatives. If convicted, Mr Leeson could face a prison sentence of up to seven years.

The SFO, which is working closely with Bank of England officials, has been involved in the Barings investigation almost from the start, although this was only acknowledged officially at a later date. As their inquiries have continued, officers involved in the SFO investigation have become convinced that Mr Leeson is likely to stand trial in Singapore where they believe the authorities have a clearer case against him. Singapore has until May 2 to finalise its case. Mr Leeson has retained the services of a UK lawyer, Stephen Pollard, of solicitors Kingsley Napley. Yesterday, Mr Pollard declined to comment.

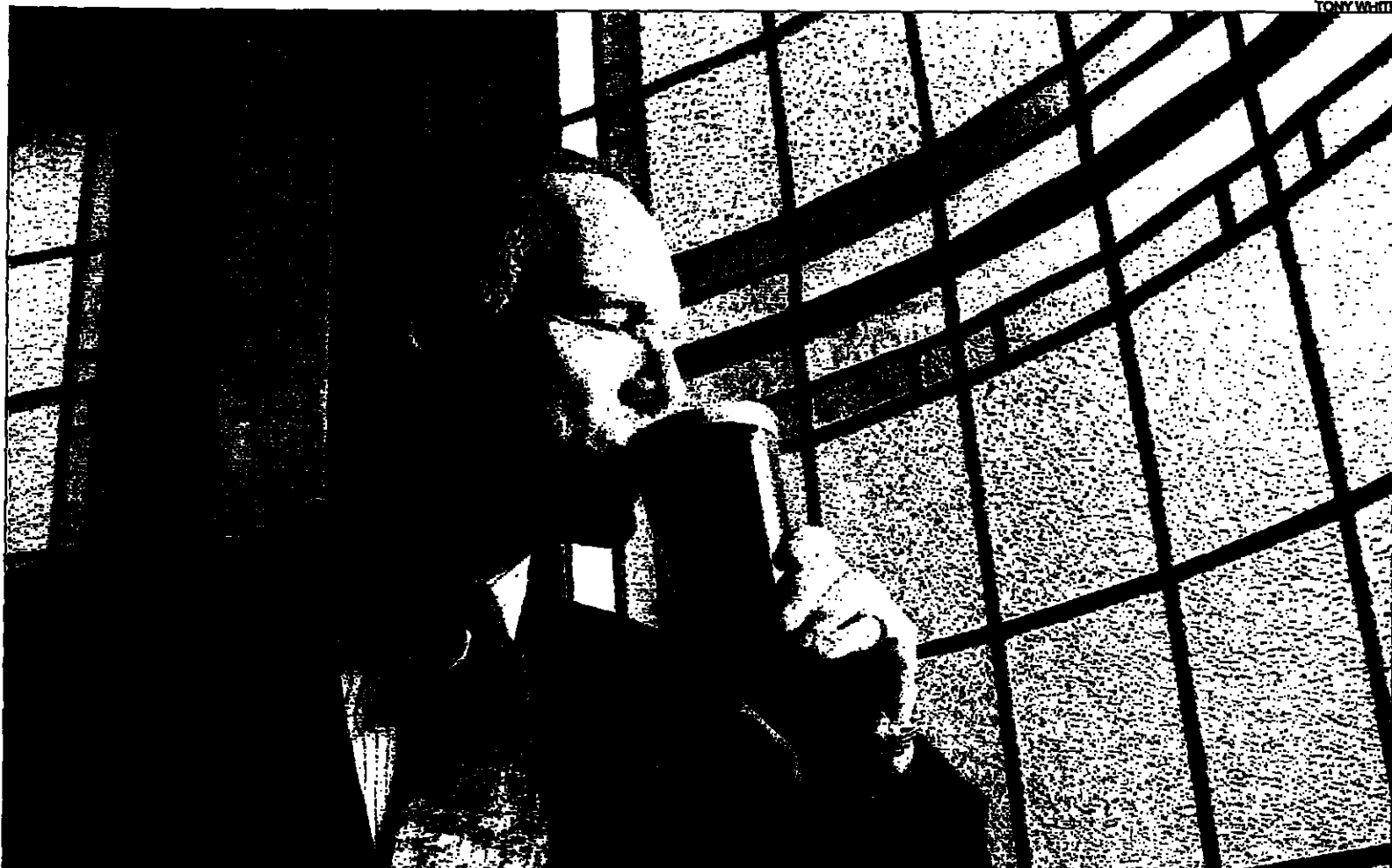
To mount a criminal prosecution in the UK the SFO would have to prove that Mr Leeson intended to defraud the 233-year-old merchant bank or that Barings staff in London were actively involved in a fraud. Even if the SFO does find grounds to pursue a case for Mr Leeson to answer in Britain, and it has not yet done so, it would raise issues of jurisdiction as well as diplomatic ones. Singapore is a member of the Commonwealth. It also feels that its reputation for overseeing a well-run and properly regulated stock exchange has been undermined by the Barings collapse.

However, Mr Leeson could still face legal proceedings in the UK if the German authorities were to refuse Singapore's application and sufficient evidence was found to support a British extradition.

Meanwhile, the Board of Banking Supervisors investigation set up on the orders of Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, is being conducted as "a matter of urgency" officials said yesterday.

The investigation is looking into both the factual causes of the collapse as well as the Bank of England's role in supervising Barings.

International Nederlanden Groep (ING), the new Dutch owner of Barings, has made clear that if the Bank report finds that senior staff at Barings in London knew that Mr Leeson's dealing position in Singapore had committed twice as much money as Barings was worth, they face instant dismissal.



Tony Greener, chairman, reported full-year figures of £915 million for 1994, in line with City expectations. The drinks group is lifting its payout

Price spiral slows as rate rises bite

By JANET BUSH AND PHILIP BASSETT

PRICE pressures in industry are beginning to ease, according to a Confederation of British Industry survey published today that backs up news yesterday of still relatively subdued inflation in the high street and suggests that the three base rate rises since last year have cooled the economy.

Headline inflation was boosted largely by higher mortgage rates to 3.4 per cent in February, compared with 3.3 per cent in January. This was the highest level since October 1992.

However, underlying inflation, which strips out mortgage interest payments, fell to 2.7 per cent, from 2.8 per cent.

Another inflation indicator, RPI, which excludes mortgages and indirect taxes and was published by the Central Statistical Office for the first time yesterday, stood at 1.8 per cent in February, against 1.9 per cent in January.

Taking these inflation figures together with today's

monthly industrial trends survey from the CBI, the City now believes that the authorities are likely to keep interest rates on hold at least until May although another sharp fall in sterling would be a concern.

The CBI survey of more than 1,300 manufacturing companies at the end of February and the start of this month shows that 37 per cent of firms questioned are planning to increase their prices over the next four months, compared with 10 per cent intending to cut them. Fifty-three per cent forecast no change.

This balance of 27 per cent forecasting higher prices is down from the 31 per cent of last month's survey, although it remains above the levels recorded towards the end of last year and is considerably higher than the 3 per cent balance registered this time last year.

Sudhir Junankar, CBI economic analysis associate director, said: "The outlook for inflation is a little more encouraging than earlier

in the year." The survey, covering companies accounting for half the UK's manufacturing exports, shows record export orders for the second successive month. The balance of companies reporting above normal export order books was 14 per cent, the highest figure since the question was first asked in April, 1977.

Overall demand remains strong, at a balance of 11 per cent. This is down from February's 13 per cent, but is the highest figure, apart from the February reading, since December, 1988. Manufacturing output is expected to rise markedly over the next four months, although the survey suggests a marginal slowing of activity.

Last month's rise in headline inflation was mainly caused by dearer mortgages after base rates were raised on February 2. There was also a boost as January sales ended, particularly in the household goods sector, and higher prices as increased excise du-

ties imposed in November's Budget fed through.

The RPI index was first published by the Bank of England in its *Inflation Report* of November 1993. The Bank favours the measure because it effectively takes out the effect of government policy — such as higher taxes and interest rates — and reflects underlying price trends.

There has been speculation that the Government intends to switch its inflation target to this measure, currently nearly a full 1 per cent below the underlying measure now targeted. However, the authorities insisted yesterday that they would not review the target until later this year.

RPI, at 1.8 per cent, is far below the tax and price index which, from yesterday, will be available only on request. The TPI, which includes direct and indirect taxes, rose to 4 per cent in February, from 3.9 per cent in January.

Pennington, page 23

Guinness talk of buyback lifts shares

TONY GREENER, chairman of Guinness, yesterday hinted that the group may use its strong cash flow to launch a share buyback and raise the value of the remaining holdings (Martin Waller writes).

Guinness shares jumped by 16.5p, to 438p, after the worldwide brewer and drinks group unveiled 1994 figures that were in line with expectations. The reorganisation of the relationship with LVMH, the French luxury goods group, deflated the previous year's profits by £175 million. Pre-tax profits in 1994 therefore rose in directly comparable terms by 5 per cent, to £915 million.

The group is boosting dividends, a final of 9.9p making a total up 8 per cent to 13.8p, paid out of earnings that held level because of the LVMH restructuring at 31.6p against 31.7p.

Tempus, page 24

OFT hits at share issue costs

By CARL MORTISHED

THE Office of Fair Trading has found potential conflicts of interest and a lack of competition in the underwriting of share issues by banks and institutions in the City of London.

Sir Bryan Carsberg, Director-General of the OFT, criticised the fixed-price 2 per cent commission structure used by merchant banks and brokers in the underwriting of traditional rights issues, stating in a report published yesterday that competition is not working effectively.

Sir Bryan said he was concerned about the fixed level of fees, the limited scope for competition in fees and the potential for conflicts of interest between advisers, underwriters and sub-underwriters.

He has held back from referring what he described as "an opaque area of City practice" to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, however, and said that company directors were the key to improvement and should seek the best deal when raising capital.

"Directors could, for example, probe much more critically the advice they receive," he proposed.

"They might consider appointing separate merchant banking advisers and lead underwriters and might more fully explore variants, such as deep discounting, to the traditional underwritten issue."

The OFT said it wanted the debate to be taken forward by the London Investment Banking Association and other trade associations, such as the Association of British Insurers.

Yesterday's report adopts the conclusions of a study by the London Business School, which concluded that companies were overcharged by up to 86 per cent for sub-underwriting from 1986 to 1993.

Pennington, page 23

BUSINESS TODAY

STOCK MARKET INDICES

FT-SE 100	5136.4	(-3.3)
Yield	4.35%	
FT-SE All share	1594.70	(-0.51)
Nikkei	15813.41	(-51.44)
Dow Jones	4080.80	(+7.51)*
S&P Composite	456.53	(+0.86)*

US RATE

Federal Funds	5 1/8%	(5 1/8%)
Long Bond	102 1/8%	(102 1/8%)
Yield	7.43%	(7.46%)

LONDON MONEY

3-mth Interbank	6 1/8%	(6 1/8%)
Life long gilt	102 1/8%	(102 1/8%)
Future (Mar)	102 1/8%	(102 1/8%)

STERLING

New York	1.5920*	(1.5885)
London	1.5923	(1.5871)
DM	2.2409	(2.2300)
FF	7.5300	(7.5010)
Yen	146.80	(146.62)
S Index	85.2	(85.1)

YEN/DOLLAR

London	1.4068*	(1.4032)
DM	4.9775*	(4.9690)
FF	1.1675*	(1.1642)
Yen	88.25*	(88.01)
S Index	90.5	(90.8)

Tokyo close Yen 88.75

London	1.4068*	(1.4032)
DM	4.9775*	(4.9690)
FF	1.1675*	(1.1642)
Yen	88.25*	(88.01)
S Index	90.5	(90.8)

Brent 15-day (Jun)	\$17.00	(\$17.10)
Oil	58.25*	(58.01)

* denotes midday trading price

Bus queue

Bus groups head the queue among the 37 organisations that have formally signalled their interest in operating train services in the first package of British Rail franchises offered to the private sector. The franchises have combined passenger revenues of £1.2 billion. Page 22

Paper talk

United Newspapers is said to be in talks to sell its consumer magazine business to Pearson for an estimated £20 million. A strong performance from magazines and exhibitions helped United to lift 1994 profits before exceptional items 17 per cent to £138 million. Page 23, Tempus 24

Abrupt dismissal at Littlewoods

By JON ASHWORTH AND KATE ALDERSON



Dale: series of setbacks

THE chief executive of Littlewoods was sacked yesterday after a series of setbacks for the private pools, mail order and stores group. Barry Dale, after several years with the company, was dismissed from his £787,000 a year post by unanimous board agreement.

Bill Huntley, deputy chief executive and head of the mail order division, is acting managing director during the hunt for a successor. Leonard van Geest, chairman, said the company was seeking a chief executive of the highest management calibre.

It had been thought a mem-

ber of the Moores family was poised to take control amid dissatisfaction over the group's direction. Prodig Guha, former deputy chief executive, was summarily dismissed in October after holding an unauthorised meeting with a journalist. He has started legal action against Littlewoods alleging racial discrimination and claiming £2.5 million.

Fears about the impact of the National Lottery were borne out when Littlewoods revealed it has lost 10 per cent of its pools business to the weekly televised draw. It announced in February that 560

jobs were to go out of a workforce of 4,000, but denied the two events were connected.

Separately, a former business partner in the Far East is suing the company for £1 million. Private detectives have been called in to investigate allegations of corruption at the stores' buying department.

A manager at the John Moores centre in Liverpool, said: "Nobody seems to know which direction we are going," he said. "The company needs strong, firm leadership but many think we are drifting."

Pennington, page 23

Wellcome chief leaves with £2m

By COLIN NARBROUGH

JOHN ROBB, the chairman and chief executive of the Wellcome drug group who failed to ward off a £9 billion takeover by Glaxo, the rival company, will leave with more than £2 million after resigning yesterday.

After six years at Wellcome, he will leave on March 31 with £950,000, representing two years' salary, which was topped by £55,000 to £475,000 a year in January. In addition, shares and share options will net him £1.3 million.

Russell Walls, who joined Wellcome

as finance director from Coats Viyella in January, was the only executive director not to get a place in the top executive structure that Glaxo has unveiled to start work on integrating the two businesses.

Although Mr Walls was not granted share options, his two-year contract would entitle him to leave with £500,000. Negotiations concerning his future continue.

Sir Richard Sykes, the Glaxo deputy chairman and chief executive, has been appointed to take Mr Robb's place at Wellcome. Sir Richard said his aim was to create a "research-based

world leader in pharmaceuticals". The new executive structure to create Glaxo Wellcome, which will formally become the world's largest drugs company in May, comprises task forces and project teams that should complete their planning by midsummer.

John Coombe, the Glaxo finance director, will oversee the financial and information technology aspects of integration, with Jeremy Strachan, Glaxo's legal director, chairing the task force in charge of overall integration.

The business and commercial de-

velopment operations task force will be chaired by James Cochran, Wellcome's European operations director, with Sean Lance, his Glaxo counterpart, as his deputy.

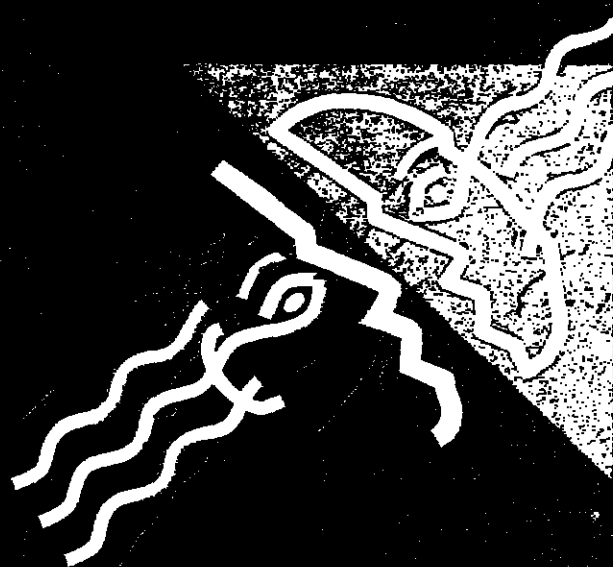
The team for research and development will be headed by Jim Nield, Glaxo's group research and development director, with David Barry, Wellcome's research and development director, as his deputy.

Joe Blaker, Glaxo's group technical director, will lead the manufacturing operations task force, whose deputy chairman will be Roger Price, Wellcome's production director.

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TRADE INDEMNITY

Bus groups head rush to bid for rail services

By Ross Tieman and Jonathan Pryn

THIRTY-SEVEN groups have formally signalled their interest in operating train services in the first package of British Rail franchises offered to the private sector.

Four bus operators have applied to Roger Salmon, franchise director, to pre-qualify. They face competition from management and employee teams in each of the franchise areas, as well as a variety of industrial groups and consortiums. In an effort to accommodate a late rush of interest, Mr Salmon has extended the deadline for companies interested in bidding to demonstrate their suitability.

The eight franchises are a mixture of commuter and trunk routes totalling 5,789 miles of track and combined passenger revenues of £1.2 billion.

The franchise director has also indicated that he will review whether to accept a joint bid for both Gatwick Express and Network SouthCentral, even though the London and south coast commuter franchise competes with the airport shuttle on the same lines. His rethink was announced after several of those who pre-qualified, including managers of Gatwick Express, said they wished to bid for both.

Foremost among the poten-

tial bidders are Badgerline and Stagecoach, the quoted bus operators. Each has registered interest in all eight franchises. Prism, a consortium of bus companies based in Reading, has also shown interest in at least one franchise, while the GRT bus company, the former Grampian Regional Transport, wants to bid for ScotRail.

London & Continental Railways, a consortium including Richard Branson's Virgin Group, which is bidding to build the high-speed rail link from the Channel Tunnel to London, has shown an interest in all eight franchises.

Sea Containers, the cross-Channel and Irish Sea ferry group, is interested in South West Trains and Great Western serving the West Country and South Wales. GB Railways, a consortium, has also registered interest.

Invitations to tender for the first three franchises, Great Western, LTS Rail and South Central, will be issued on May 10. The closing date for pre-registration has been extended to April 13. To allow the possibility of joint offers, the Gatwick Express franchise will now be offered a few weeks later, alongside Network SouthCentral. East Coast Main Line, ScotRail and Midland Main Line.



Tunnel vision: improved sales in markets at home and abroad for John Carter, Hepworth's chief executive

Earnings up at Hepworth

STRONG exports from Britain and a buoyant domestic construction market helped Hepworth, the building materials group, to report sharply higher earnings in 1994 (Eric Reguly writes).

Pre-tax profits rose 30 per cent to £75.5 million and earnings per share increased to 21.6p from 19.2p. Turnover, at £696 million, was up 6 per cent.

In spite of the higher profits and a decline in gearing from 12 per cent to 8 per cent, Hepworth is leaving its 1994 dividend unchanged at 14.85p, with the final of 9.35p to be paid on July 14.

New look for staff at Bank

By Patricia Tehan, Banking Correspondent

THE Bank of England told its 3,500 staff yesterday that they had to recognise that they were working for a very different organisation from 20 years ago, and an overhaul of its personnel functions would underpin last year's management changes.

In an internal newsletter, Roy Lecky-Thompson, who was appointed in December as the Bank's first head of personnel in 30 years by Rupert Pennant-Rea, the deputy governor who resigned this week, outlined changes to staff.

He was given control of training, recruitment and career development, where policies were previously developed on an ad hoc basis in the Bank's various departments.

Mr Lecky-Thompson said: "I can understand how some staff may resent the goal posts being moved, but adaptability is the key to success in any business."

He said the restructuring of personnel functions would be completed in the middle of the year, including the establishment of operating personnel units to provide dedicated advice to specific areas. The

changes include giving staff more responsibility for their career planning and training, encouraging competition for vacancies, improving management development, and a 24-hour helpline "to help staff and their families cope with pressure". Working parties are being set up to consider the salary policy for management grades, which is expected to lead to more emphasis on performance-related pay from next year.

The Bank is also planning to publish the results of regular staff opinion surveys.

Power prices inquiry announcement likely

STEPHEN LITTLECHILD, the electricity regulator, is today expected to announce a full inquiry into the pricing regime in his industry that is likely to lead to eventual reductions in electricity bills. Professor Littlechild caused consternation on the stock market two weeks ago when he said he was minded to reconsider the five-year regime put in place in August and widely criticised as too lenient, sending share prices plummeting across the sector.

He gave himself until today to decide whether such a review would be needed. The market now thinks he will go ahead and start the process of reassessing the complex formulae which govern the extent the industry can raise prices rather than announce some sort of "quick fix" in the form of one-off rebates, as has been rumoured. The regulator is meanwhile thought to have suggested that a £100 rebate, to be paid over a four-year period, might be sufficient. But that plan hit immediate opposition from some of the companies themselves. While several believe it would be the simplest way to get the industry off the hook of a full pricing review, others have refused to accept such a solution. The review will take at least three months, and this timescale could stretch to the end of the year and beyond if one or more of the companies exercise their right to take the eventual outcome to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

Tietmeyer's tough line

THE Bundesbank will not rescue firms which run into trouble because of trading in derivatives. Hans Tietmeyer, the bank's president, said in a speech in Saarbrücken that it should be unmistakably clear to all at a time of crisis that "the Bundesbank cannot and will not step in as the rescuer in time of need with generous liquidity", adding that "every participant must bear the consequences of his strategies". Herr Tietmeyer said that more transparency and risk control was needed to cut the risks of derivative trading.

Slough disappoints

SHARES in Slough Estates, the property group, fell 10p to 220p after disappointment over the company's year-end net asset value which rose only 2.6 per cent to 276p. The industrial property portfolio, which accounts for 59 per cent of its £1.8 billion of investment properties, rose 0.7 per cent. Pre-tax profits rose from £55 million to £64 million and earnings per share were up 30 per cent to 9.1p. Slough for the first time revealed the level of overvaluing in the portfolio: 8.5 per cent above market rates. The dividend is held at 8.1p.

TSB closures warning

SIR NICHOLAS GOODISON, chairman of TSB, said that more branches must close if the bank is to be able to maintain shareholders' rewards for risking their capital. Speaking at the annual meeting yesterday, he said that there were far too many banks, building societies and insurance companies competing for the same business. He identified three trends in the financial services industry — intense competition, fusion of services such as banking, insurance and mortgages, and the growing influence of technology.

Manders leaps to £24m

MANDERS, the international coatings and printing inks company, emerged from a period of restructuring with surplus profits of £23.9 million in 1994, including a £12.2 million surplus on disposal, compared with profits of £10.3 million in the previous 12 months. Operating profits from continuing operations were £9.22 million, against £3.89 million. Earnings were 41.09p a share (18.99p). A final dividend of 8.1p a share, due June 5, lifts the total to 11p from 10p. The shares rose 9p to 312p.

Confidence at Cattle's

AN EXCEPTIONAL charge of £3.2 million against disposals restrained growth at Cattle's (Holdings), the financial services company. But 1994 pre-tax profits still rose to £16.7 million from £15.8 million in the previous 12 months, and the company said it was confident of further progress this year even though the political and economic climate remained uncertain. Earnings eased to 8.7p a share from 9.5p, but the total dividend is increased to 5.75p a share from 5p, with a 3.6p final, due May 26.

See-saw year for Laing

A SHARP decline in earnings from the British construction operations was a feature of 1994 results from John Laing, the builder, in part balanced by a better performance from house-building. Pre-tax profits were £23.8 million (£18.3 million), but there were also one-off gains from disposals that rose by £4.4 million to £10.6 million. Martin Laing, the chairman, left, said construction profits at the operating level dropped £9 million to £2 million. House-building operating profits grew from £3.7 million to £9.4 million. A 6p final payout maintains the total dividend at 9p.

Travis Perkins advances

TRAVIS PERKINS, the supplier of timber and building materials, said that, although sales and operating profits in the first two months of this year were ahead of the comparable period of 1994, it was now apparent that the rate of growth in the construction industry was slowing. However, the company's shares rose 9p to 288p in response to a rise in 1994 profits to £38.9 million before tax, from £20.5 million. Earnings more than doubled to 26.4p a share, from 13p. A final dividend of 6.2p a share, due on May 22, makes a total of 9p (8p).

APV back on track

APV, the engineering group, which surprised investors in September with a £32.5 million restructuring charge that led to a loss of £18.2 million compared with pre-tax profits in 1993 of £13.4 million, and the departure of the chief executive, is predicting a £14 million operating profit improvement in the first year and £20 million in a full year. The company warned that competitive pressures, which undermined prices last year, were unlikely to ease in the near future. The dividend for the year has been cut from 5.4p to 2.7p.

William Baird ahead

A STRONG performance from its contract clothing operations coupled with a first-time contribution from acquisitions boosted pre-tax profits at William Baird, the textile group, to £25.1 million from £19.6 million in the year to December 31. The continuing strength of Marks & Spencer, its biggest customer, benefited the contract clothing business. Turnover in the division increased by 11 per cent and operating profits doubled. A final dividend of 5.8p (5.35p), due on July 6, brings the total payout to 9.35p (8.9p).

LEGAL & PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICES

AFEX CORPORATION SOCIÉTÉ ANONYME

(Incorporated in Luxembourg, R.C. No.B19600)

NOTICE is hereby given that the thirteenth Annual General Meeting of AFEX CORPORATION will be held at the offices of Midland & Co. S.A., 65-70 boulevard de la Pétruse, Luxembourg on Friday, 31st March, 1995 at 3.00 p.m. (local time). In addition to the normal business the following Special Business will be considered:

- To increase the Company's share to "Monte Carlo".
- To increase the amount of the share premium in Article 5 to account for costs not previously included.
- To amend Article 5 to remove reference to the share premium account.
- To extend the authority of the directors to increase the issued share capital for a further five years.

Copies of the Annual Report and Accounts are available from City Group Limited, 25 City Road, London, EC1Y 1BQ. 68-70 boulevard de la Pétruse, Luxembourg 1015, 18th March, 1995

GRAINGER & SMITH LIMITED

(Registered No. 27831)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

HAWES OF MORRISON LIMITED

(Registered No. 15484)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMPANIES ACT 1985

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

MASTERS STONES LIMITED

(Registered No. 254733)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

NO COOPER OF 1986

IN THE HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

PARKER PEN STATIONERY LIMITED

(Registered No. 15484)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

THE HOUSE OF SAVAGE

(Registered No. 449031)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

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(Registered No. 449031)

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M. C. Murray, Director

UDS (NO 9) LIMITED

(Registered No. 13399)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

UDS (NO 10) LIMITED

(Registered No. 13399)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

UDS (NO 11) LIMITED

(Registered No. 13399)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

UDS (NO 12) LIMITED

(Registered No. 13399)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

UDS (NO 13) LIMITED

(Registered No. 13399)

NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to section 170(1) of the Companies Act 1985 ("the Act") that the above Company has approved a payment out of capital for the purpose of acquiring its own shares by purchase. The amount of the share premium account for the shares in question is £200,000 and the Resolution under section 173 of the Act was passed on March 20, 1995. The statutory declaration of the directors and the auditors' report required by section 173 of the Act are available for inspection at the Company's registered office, which is at 1 Grosvenor Place, London SW1X 7TA. Any creditor of the Company may, within the 8 weeks immediately following March 20, 1995, apply to the Court under section 176 of the Act for an order prohibiting the payment.

M. C. Murray, Director

PUBLIC NOTICES

CONTRACT ELECTRICITY SUPPLIES

NAME AND ADDRESS OF AWARDED AUTHORITY

The Corporation of London, City Engineer's Department, P.O. Box 270, Oldbath, London, EC2P 2QJ

AWARD PROCEDURE

The awarding authority invites interested Electricity Supply Companies to submit tenders for the supply of electricity to the Corporation of London, City Engineer's Department, P.O. Box 270, Oldbath, London, EC2P 2QJ.

PLACE OF DELIVERY

Contract Current (Oldbath) owned by the Corporation of London.

NATURE OF GOODS TO BE SUPPLIED

The supply of electricity generally in accordance with the Electricity Supply Regulations 1988 and the Electricity Act 1989.

RETURN OF TENDER

Tenders should be submitted to the Corporation of London, City Engineer's Department, P.O. Box 270, Oldbath, London, EC2P 2QJ.

DEADLINES

Applications shall be in English and must be received by the Corporation no later than 12 noon on Friday 12th May 1995. The period during which the tenders are to be kept open is for a minimum of 1 month.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the 15th Annual General Meeting of Provident Mutual Life Assurance Association ("the Association") will be held at Skinner's Hall, 8 1/2 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2SP on Wednesday 19 April 1995 at 12.30 pm, for the following purposes:

Resolution 1. To adopt the Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 1994.

Resolution 2. To re-elect Mr Brian Richardson, who retires by rotation, as a Director of the Association.

Resolution 3. To re-elect Mr Colin Edward Hughes, who retires by rotation, as a Director of the Association.

Resolution 4. To re-elect Mr John David Neville, who retires by rotation, as a Director of the Association.

Resolution 5. To re-appoint Price Waterhouse as Auditors of the Association, to hold office until the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting.

Mrs V G C Steadman, Company Secretary, 1 March 1995

A member entitled to attend and vote at the meeting is entitled to appoint a proxy to attend and vote instead of him or her. A proxy need not be a member of the Association. A form of proxy can be obtained by writing to the Company Secretary at the Association's Registered Address: PO Box 568, 25/31 Moorgate, London, EC2R 6BA.

Registered in England number 8870.

PROVIDENT MUTUAL

LEGAL, PUBLIC COMPANY & PARLIAMENTARY NOTICES

TO PLACE NOTICES FOR THIS SECTION PLEASE TELEPHONE

0171-782 7344 OR FAX: 0171-782 7827

Notices are subject to transmission and should be received by 2.30pm two days prior to insertion.

Shortages put squeeze on Orange

Orange, the mobile-phone network controlled by Hutchison Whampoa, of Hong Kong, said its subscriber base, up from 100,000 to 130,000 since Christmas, would be larger but for difficulty in obtaining handsets. Orange does not expect its first profits until 1997.

Hutchison, whose other activities include property development, container-terminal operations, retailing and manufacturing, yesterday reported pre-tax profits of £1.3 billion for 1994, up 33 per cent.

Production up

Manganese Bronze Holdings has increased total production at its Coventry factory to 48 vehicles a week from an average of 44 last year. Jamie Borwick, chief executive, said: "The tax market shows no sign of flagging." Group profits were £1.97 million before tax (£1.27 million) in the half year to January 31. The interim dividend is 2p (1.5p).

Contract won

Concert, the international telecommunications network owned by British Telecom and MCI, of the US, yesterday said it had won a £100 million five-year contract from DHL, the large air express company.

Lufthansa lift

Lufthansa, the German airline, marked its first year free of state control with a pre-tax profit of DM306 million, due to a rise in revenues. In 1993, it lost DM53 million.

KLM plan

KLM, the highly profitable Dutch national carrier, plans to raise its stake in Air UK, Britain's third largest scheduled airline, to 45 per cent, from 14.9 per cent.

Manweb talks

Manweb, the electricity company serving the north west of England, may sell five super-stores. The Chester company is in talks with Scottish Power.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia \$	2.30	2.13
Austria Sch	16.69	15.19
Belgium Fr	49.69	44.75
Canada S	2.334	2.174
Cyprus CypL	0.755	0.700
Denmark Kr	2.533	6.70
Finland Mk	2.33	2.68
France Fr	0.34	7.69
Germany DM	2.37	2.17
Greece Pr	362.00	2.00
Hong Kong S	12.06	11.51
India Ru	1.05	1.02
Israel	5.251	4.498
Italy Lit	29.00	26.00
Japan Yen	55.00	0.53
Netherlands G	0.948	1.540
Norway Kr	2.650	2.400
Norway Hk	10.54	9.74
Portugal Esc	345.50	227.00
Spain Ptas	162.00	159.00
Sweden Fr	212.22	114.42
Switzerland S	1.58	1.61
Turkey Lira	rotr	64,650.0
US \$	1.005	1.556

Prices for email denominated currencies as quoted by Barclays Bank plc. Different rates apply to investors' orders.

□ Carry on underwriting, says the OFT □ Statistics and more statistics □ The deep end of the pools at Littlewoods

Underwritten, overpriced

ANY investor who still clings to the notion of perfect markets should be required to read Sir Bryan Carsberg's masterly demolition of the monumental egos that make up the City merchant banking fraternity. Such, of course, was not the intention of the Director-General of Fair Trading who yesterday published a concise and well-argued analysis of the City's archaic system of pricing risk when underwriting rights issues.

Indeed, the reaction of the bankers and fund managers who read his report will have been relief: no referral to the MMC, therefore no problem. City practice has been vindicated, barring a swipe at potential conflicts of interest. Carry on underwriting at 2 per cent.

Unfortunately, City practice is not vindicated by the report but revealed to be at best complacent and a bit quaint; at worst, highly suspect. When the OFT published Paul Marsh's critique of the cost of underwriting, merchant bankers pooh-poohed the analysis. One might then reasonably ask for an alternative pricing structure. Evidently, Sir Bryan did and here is the outcome: "Discussion with those involved in underwriting have yielded no consensus on how risk is in fact evaluated in this market. ... It is surprising that when so much work has been done on introducing quantitative

methods into other areas of financial services so little has apparently been done in respect of underwriting." Touché.

In fact, serious work is virtually never done by the merchant banks that pump out rights issues like sausages. A typical rights issue requires little more than the production of a volume of paper printed from standard precedents by lawyers and a bit of argy-bargy by the broker as he cajoles and bullies fund managers to "take this lot and I'll owe you one".

This is not and never has been a market in any sense of the word. The sharing out of commissions between broker, banker and institution has been a feature of City life for so long that its participants cannot fully explain the reasons for it. Some fund managers said sub-underwriting was not profitable, others said it was a "bribe", but the key to the process is to be on a broker's sub-underwriting list, and refusal of too many deals carries the sanction of being cast into a fund manager's wilderness.

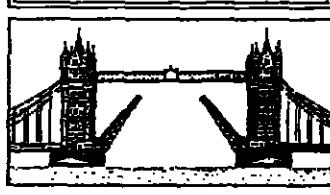
Sir Bryan rightly points out that the remedy lies with com-

pany directors who are the clients and should call the tune on fees. Alas, if only life were like that. One curious feature of this arcane system is that the broker who prices a rights issue is traditionally hired not by the company but by the merchant banker whose initial concern is to ensure his risk is laid off, rather than achieving a tight pricing for the company. Such conflicts of interest continue because chairmen, often isolated in their boardrooms, rely on their merchant bankers for comfort and support. Such men and women are unlikely to crack the whip and demand cheaper deals.

Delights of price competition

INFLATION has become as much a political concept as a monetary one. The baffling comings and goings of price indices are best understood in this context. This month, in comes fashionable RPTV, which shows 12-month inflation at only 1.8 per cent. Out goes the taxes and prices index, introduced as a

PENNINGTON



didactic political tool by Lord Lawson, but now showing 4 per cent and rising.

The Government's motives look simple enough. Highlight figures that give the best impression. But what of others? In 1995, left-of-centre expansionists are big fans of RPTV, the measure of prices that excludes both housing costs and indirect or local taxes. They have joined the consensus that this measure should be used for the Treasury's inflation target, though they would prefer it to stay at 0-4 per cent than move to 0-3 per cent. That looks odd, when traditional RPI inflation is running at 3.4 per cent. But the lower the measure of inflation, the less excuse the Bank of England has

to press for further depressing base rate increases.

Has the Bank missed a trick? It was the official sponsor of RPTV, which made its debut in the November 1993 *Inflation Report*. At that time, however, RPTV showed 12-month inflation at 3.5 per cent. RPIX inflation, previously used as the "underlying" rate, stood at 3.3 per cent. The Bank was trying to set any success achieved in fighting inflation in the most sober light possible. This justified caution when base rates might have been lower.

All is fair in statistics. Since no single measure is wholly correct, people are entitled to use whichever one suits. Pensioners and the poor, for instance, want the highest legitimate rate used for uprating benefits and pensions, whether state or private. Union wage-bargainers should, for the moment, concentrate on the annual change in the TPI, which measures the rise in gross incomes needed to maintain private living standards. This year, that will be much higher than average pay settlements.

If policy is based on RPTV,

inflation adjustments on headline RPI and wages on the TPI, statistics should have an interesting impact on the economy.

Downhill and over Dale

BARRY DALE'S abrupt ejection from Littlewoods has a strong whiff of the erring footman being escorted firmly to the servants' exit around the back, but that is what you can expect if you work for a family business: no flowery tributes, no thanks for all the years of service, just a cold dismissal and the complaint that one simply cannot seem to find the staff these days.

Mr Dale is carrying the can for a frightening sequence of misfortunes that would certainly have meant management changes if the group were a public quoted company. Prodig Guha, the man replaced by Mr Dale's temporary replacement, went amid highly mysterious circumstances and some fairly hairy allegations from both sides, not all of which have yet made it into the public domain.

Littlewoods' main problem is its reliance on pools, a business in decline since the advent of the National Lottery. It is the largest player, with three quarters of the market, against Ladbroke's Verons operation which has below 20 per cent, and therefore less vulnerable to erosion, which is why the admitted rate of decline is less than the 15 per cent admitted by Ladbroke recently.

The pools earnings have always buttressed an uncertain retail operation that has tended to resemble Woolworths without the designer-label cachet.

Pools operators are working at a severe disadvantage in terms of tax and advertising to the Lottery and the odds for change are not good. One hopes the Moores family do not have too high expectations of Mr Dale's eventual successor.

Singapore stop

AFTER a posse of investigators, accountants and bankers has visited and left Singapore, the Serious Fraud Office is on its way to examine the Barings affair. Nick Leeson's solicitors will struggle to persuade the SFO to extradite him to Britain. As the BCCI affair showed, the SFO is pragmatic over international cases. With Singapore officials so keen, the SFO seems unwilling to disturb them.

Pearson tipped to buy United magazine unit

By NEIL BENNETT

UNITED Newspapers is said to be in talks to sell its consumer magazine business to Pearson for an estimated £20 million.

United Consumer Magazines, also known as Linkhouse Magazines, owns 20 specialist leisure titles and has an annual turnover of about £20 million. United Newspapers do not believe that the business is large enough to be one of its core interests and has been looking for a buyer. Pearson is known to be keen to develop a consumer magazine division and last year paid £52.5 million for Future Publishing.

Graham Wilson, United's managing director, refused to comment on any sale of Linkhouse. The subsidiary's management is also believed

to have considered a management buyout.

United yesterday announced that it is changing its name to United News & Media. Mr Wilson said that the change is intended to take account of the group's broadening range of activities, including advertising periodicals and exhibitions.

The group's profits rose 17 per cent to £138 million before exceptional items last year. Underlying earnings per share grew 7 per cent to 38.1p, and a final dividend of 15.25p, payable on July 3, will make 23p for the year, an increase of 5 per cent.

The increase was driven by a strong performance from the magazines and exhibitions, the profits from which grew £12 million to £37.5 million.

This offset a 9 per cent slide in profits from the national newspapers division to £30 million, caused by a sharp fall in the circulation of the *Daily Express* as a result of the price war. Mr Wilson said that the group believed that it had started to reverse the decline and improve the branding of the newspaper.

By contrast, regional newspapers increased profits 2 per cent to £30 million thanks to a 5 per cent rise in classified advertising volumes. Profits margins slipped, however, due to the inclusion of several free newspapers bought during the year.

United spent £153 million on acquisitions last year. These included Harmon Homes, the US advertising magazine group, the Hong Kong Inter-

national Trade Fair Group and Visual Communications. These pushed group debts to £102 million, in contrast to the net cash of £4.5 million with which it had started the year. The latter was generated from the disposal of Exel Financial in 1993.

Mr Wilson said that the group was looking for more acquisitions, particularly of exhibition groups.

Mr Wilson also revealed that United is planning to relaunch *Exchange & Mart*, its flagship advertising magazine. From next month, the magazine will be published with a hard spine, bound in three sections, in an effort to stem the tide of progress made by competitors such as *Loot*.

Tempus, page 24

Morrison challenges supermarket rivals

By SUSAN GILCHRIST

WIM MORRISON, the north of England supermarket group, has thrown down the gauntlet to its larger rivals, saying it will vigorously defend its position as one of the cheapest supermarket operators.

Martin Ackroyd, finance director, said the company had worked hard to establish its value for money reputation and would make every effort to protect it: "We would always aim to give our customers the best value anywhere, even though it can have an effect on sales," he said.

Mr Ackroyd predicted continued tough competition among the food retailers in the coming year. However, he believes that Morrison has the

ability to prosper even in this difficult environment.

His remarks came as the group unveiled a 19 per cent rise in pre-tax profits to £116.1 million from £97.8 million in the year to January 29, at the top end of City expectations. Total turnover rose by 16 per cent, with like-for-like sales 3.2 per cent ahead.

The new store expansion programme accelerated with the opening of eight outlets last year, a record for the group. A further nine are planned in the current year.

A final dividend of 0.96p (0.8p) brings the total payout to 1.2p (1p). Shareholders will be paid on May 26.

Tempus, page 24

EVC gives back two plants to save costs

By NEIL BENNETT

EVC International, the PVC manufacturer floated on the Amsterdam stock exchange by ICI and EniChem last year, has given two of its plants back to its shareholders in an effort to cut costs.

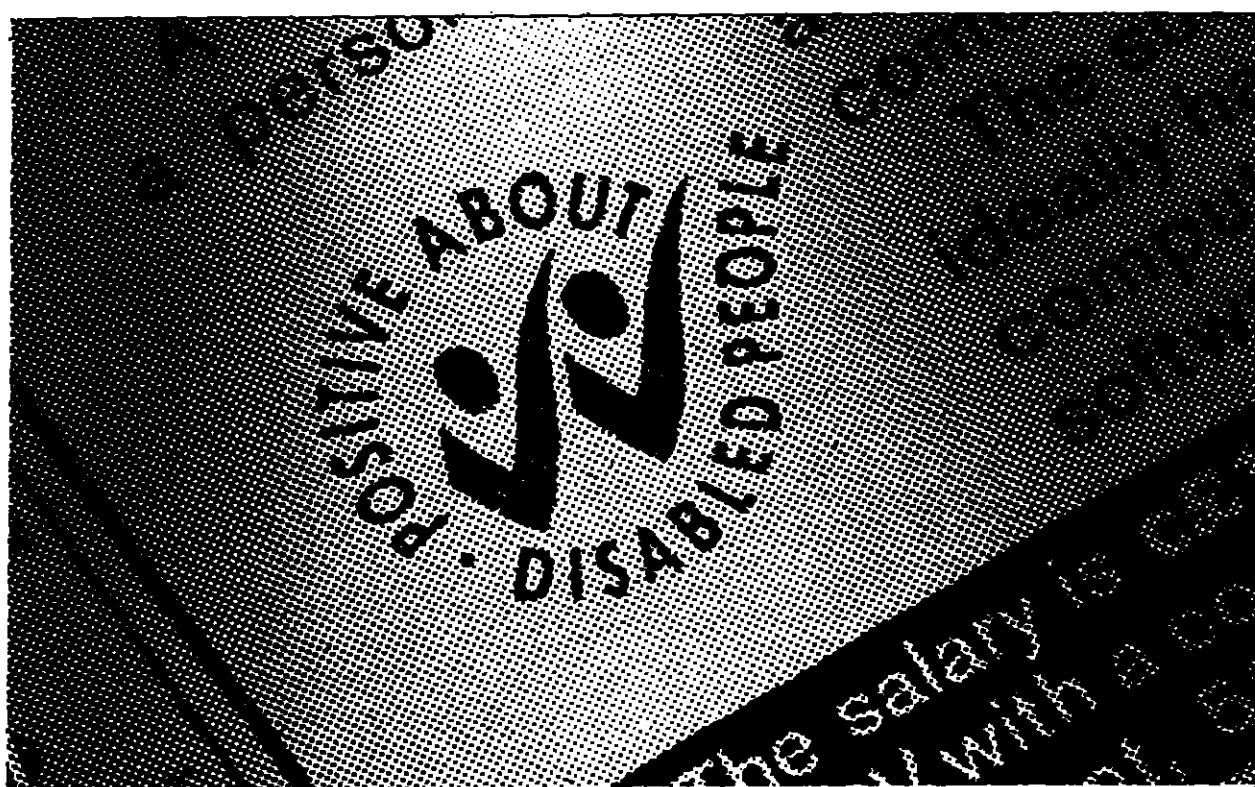
One of the plants is a monomer manufacturing facility at Runcorn, Cheshire, with 100 employees. The company said it was surplus to requirements, and that ICI would continue to run it for now, although it is likely to be closed eventually.

EVC also announced that it comfortably beat its profits forecast for 1994, made at its flotation in October. The group enjoyed an operating profit of 110 million guilders

(£43 million), compared with a pro-forma loss of 80 million guilders in 1993. The profit was 25 per cent higher than forecast, which the company attributed to a further 10 per cent rise in PVC prices in the last two months of the year.

Yearly sales rose 28 per cent to 2.47 billion guilders, thanks to strong demand from the European construction and packaging industries.

Three-quarters of the recovery came from EVC's upstream manufacturing businesses. Ettore dell'Isola, the chairman, said EVC would consider acquisitions that rationalised the European PVC industry, or an investment in a Far East plant.



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CHEMICALS

Recruitment agencies that specialise in computer staff placements are advertising positions online, reports **David Guest**

Doug Graham, a project manager, is one of the first to test a new online job-hunting service.

● IT specialists interested in Reed Direct Access can contact the organization via electronic mail at directaccess@solo.piper.com, or via the bulletin board number 0181-288 3838, or by fax to 0181-283 3688.

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INFOTECH

Nicholas Negroponte looks towards the future of a high-technology world where the computer will recognise, hear and understand the user

My dream is for computers to be more like people. This idea is vulnerable to criticism for being too romantic, vague, or unrealistic. If anything, I would criticise it for shooting too low.

The challenge for the next decade is to make computers that know you, learn about your needs, and understand verbal and non-verbal languages. A computer should know the difference between your saying "Kissinger" and "kissing her", not because it can find the small acoustic difference, but because it can understand the meaning. For the moment personal computers are less able to sense human presence than are outdoor floodlights that have simple motion sensors.

The solution is to reverse our thinking. Instead of trying to make it easier for a person to use a computer, we should ask what will make it easier for computers to deal with humans. For example, how can you possibly hold a conversation with people if you don't even know they are there?

You can't see them, and you don't know how many there are. Are they smiling? Are they even paying attention? We talk longingly about human-computer interactions and conversational systems, and yet we are fully prepared to leave one participant in this dialogue totally in the dark. It is time to make computers see and hear.

Seeing eye to eye with computers

Research on, and the application of, computer vision have been almost exclusively devoted to scene analysis, especially for military uses, such as autonomous vehicles and smart bombs. Applications in outer space are also compelling and drive the state of the art. If you have a robot roaming around the Moon, it cannot just transmit the video of what it sees back to a human operator on Earth, because it takes too long for the signal to travel, even at the speed of light.

If the robot comes upon a precipice, by the time the human operator has seen the video image of the cliff and sent a message back to the Moon telling the robot to stop moving forward, the robot by then will have fallen over the edge. This case is one in which the robot must depend on its own judgment based on what it sees.

Recently, scientists have started examining computer recognition of people to improve the human-computer interface. Your face is, in effect, your display device and your

computer should be able to read it, which requires the recognition of your face and its unique expression. The technical challenge of recognising faces and facial expressions is formidable; nevertheless, its realisation is eminently achievable.

Imagine reading a computer screen and being able to ask: "What does that mean? Who is she? How did I get there? That, she, and there are defined by the direction of your gaze at the moment. Your questions concern the point of contact between your eyes and the text. Eyes are not normally considered output devices, yet we use them that way all the time.

The way humans can detect each other's direction of gaze and make eye contact is best described as magic. Think of standing 20ft away from another person who at times is looking you right in the eye and at other times is looking just over your shoulder. You can instantly tell the difference even if that person's direction of gaze is just a

fraction of a degree off-axis with your own. How?

It surely isn't trigonometry, where you are computing the angle of a normal to the plane of the other person's eyeballs and then computing whether that normal intersects with your own line of view. No. Something else is happening — a message is passing between your eyes and that person's. We do not have a clue as to how this works.

We use our eyes to point at objects all the time. When asked where somebody went, your answer may just be to look at an open door. When asked what to carry, you may stare at one suitcase versus another. This kind of pointing, combined with head gesture, can be a very powerful channel of communication.

Several technologies exist to track eyes. One of the first demonstrations I ever saw was a head-mounted eye tracker that changed text on the screen from English into

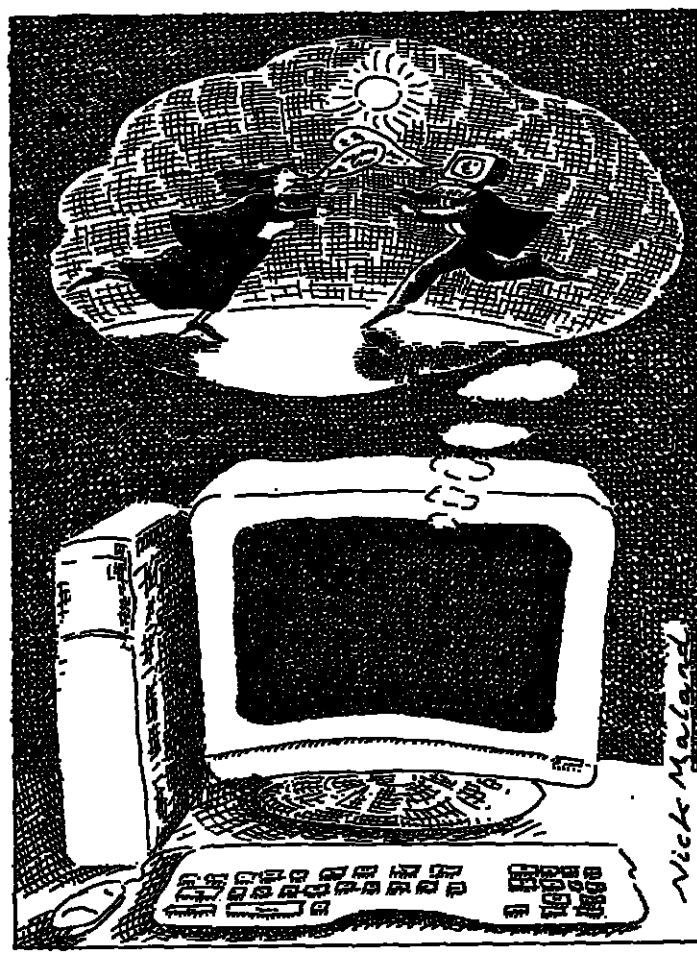
French as you read it. As your centre of vision moved from word to word, you would see French words and the screen would seem to be 100 per cent French. An onlooker, whose eyes were not being tracked, would see a screen full of roughly 99 per cent English (naturally, all the words except the one being looked at by the person wearing the eye tracker).

The more the computer knows about your position, posture, and the particular nature of your eyes, the easier it is for it to know where you are looking.

Ironically, this seemingly exotic medium of eyes-as-input will find its first application in the rather commonplace configuration of a person seated at a desktop computer. It will work even better when used concurrently with another channel of input — speech.

● An extract from *Being Digital* by Nicholas Negroponte, head of MIT's Media Laboratory in Boston. It will be published on April 6 by Hodder & Stoughton at £12.99

● A Times/Dillons forum with Nicholas Negroponte discussing the digital revolution will be held on the day of publication, Thursday April 6. The forum will be held at the Institute of Education, 20 Bedford Road, London WC1 at 7.30pm. Tickets at £10 (concessions £7.50) include £2 off the price of the book and are available by telephoning Dillons on 0171-915 6613.



Rocket's setback

THE Hotbird 1 satellite encountered yet another setback this week when the launch of the Ariane rocket due to place it into orbit had to be cancelled for the fourth time.

Hotbird 1 is one of three satellites planned by Eutelsat, the satellite organisation, which will transmit television programmes direct to European homes. At least 60 channels are planned as a rival to the Astra satellites of the Société Européenne des Satellites of Luxembourg.

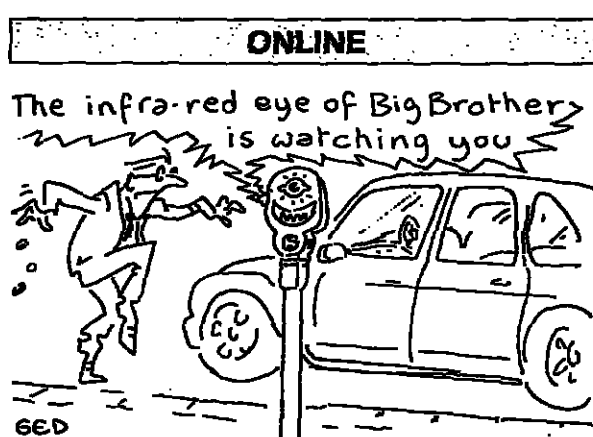
The smart money
The first smart cards to replace benefit books could be in use early next year, Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, told the Commons this week.

He said that the system would be introduced gradually at post offices and benefit offices after pilot schemes. Five companies — IBM, ICL, BT, EDS and Cardlink — have put in bids to run the system. The winner will be announced at the end of the year.

Secret message

AN INTERNET message in mid-March disclosed the name and address of the head of Israel's Shin Bet secret service even though his identity is a military secret.

Users of the global net-



Bad luck, out of time

THE SMALL pleasure of finding paid-for time left on a parking meter could soon be snatched away from motorists. Vincent Yost, an American entrepreneur, is testing meters that use infra-red sensors and computer chips that can tell when a car pulls out of a spot and then cancels any time that is left over.

They will also prevent meter feeding. "If the time limit is up and the car hasn't moved, the meter will take the money but it won't add any more time," Mr Yost says.

work who found the message were urged by the anonymous author to send letters of congratulations to the new chief, who took control of the secret services on March 1.

Backing track

ZENITH Electronics says it will back the new digital video disc players planned by Toshiba and Time Warner. It is a welcome endorsement for the two companies, which are battling to gain support for the new format.

The two firms are competing against another and incompatible type of digital

video disc being proposed by Sony and Philips. The Sin discs planned by Toshiba are double-sided and can each hold a total of 270 minutes of video. Players for the discs are expected to go on sale next spring at about £350.

A hair's breadth
SCIENTISTS at California's Cornell University say they have shrunk a device called the scanning tunnelling microscope from the present size of a thumb to that of a human hair.

The researchers said that within a decade, this advance

could lead to a fresh generation of computer data storage devices able to hold as much information as contained on 10,000 typical computer hard disks, but in the space of a thumbnail.

Big connections

MICROSOFT, Intel and other computer and telecommunications companies have announced a new standard for connecting most PC peripheral devices through a single socket in the back of the machine that could support up to 63 devices.

The new standard, to be finalised by mid-year, is also aimed at tearing down what one executive called a "technological iron curtain" between the PC and the phone that sits inches away on most desktops.

In from the cold

THE number of computer-literate "gurus" who unofficially help office colleagues to solve difficulties with their PCs is growing fast. But, according to a new survey by KMPG Management Consulting, they can become a problem.

Cath Avila, who conducted the survey, says: "Often these people are operating well outside the information technology structure and may even be employing their own standards in data security and software configuration. They need to be given training as well as a formal work structure."

Infotech is edited by Matthew May. E-mail address: mat@timesdelphi.com

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How to reduce cyberspace abuse

INTERNET enthusiasts and commercial online services are nervously watching the progress of pending legislation in the US that will attempt to censor cyberspace, writes Matthew May.

James Exon, a Nebraska senator, has introduced a Bill that says anyone using a computer to "annoy, abuse, threaten or harass" anyone else is liable for fines up to \$100,000 (£63,000) and a jail sentence of up to two years.

Though the legislation would not apply outside America, it could have a huge effect on the global network as so much of the information and so many users come from there.

The Bill would also allow for criminal

A Bill in America aims to penalise menaces on the superhighway

penalties on anyone who "makes, transmits, or otherwise makes available" words or images deemed offensive over any telecommunications device.

That could prompt some US-based online services to move their headquarters and technology overseas because of the inference that the carrier of the information would be held as responsible as the individual sender.

Civil liberties advocates, commercial online services and many Internet users say the Bill is tantamount to government censorship, a violation of freedom of speech and privacy. They argue that while controlling pornography is as much a concern in cyberspace as it is elsewhere, existing laws and self-policing mechanisms built into commercial online services are sufficient.

Compuserve, for example, has a feature that allows parents to block children's access to certain discussion groups. Mr Exon says his intent is "simply trying to make sure the wonderful information superhighway is safe for children to travel".

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Clock Buildings, Roundhay Road
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POP ON FRIDAY: Dick Dale is a legend whose time has finally come

Master of the rollers

Quentin Tarantino
has given surf
guitarist Dick Dale a
whole new audience.
Louise Gray reports



"The growling of Dick Dale's guitar is about anger and pain," says the ever-objective inventor of the sound of surf

Since the release of Quentin Tarantino's hip hitman movie, *Pulp Fiction*, the sound of Dick Dale, king of the surf guitar, has been hard to ignore. If the chromatic rushes and psychotic speed of *Misirlou*, Dale's 1962 guitar hit, defined Tarantino's film, then other undertakings are keen to get in on the action. Dale's music has become a hot property in terms of film and advertising rights.

Out on his remote 80-acre ranch in California's Mojave Desert, Dale — now 57, a hospitable eccentric who offsets a balding pate by dyeing what's left of his flowing locks a gothic black — is riding the popularity wave. "The growling of Dick Dale's guitar is about anger and pain," says Dale, a man who favours talking about himself in the third person. This is a device, he says — and here, psychologists may disagree — for dispensing with the ego. "Dick Dale's music is about sex. He learnt that from the Indians. And from surfing he learnt about the fragility of the human form, about the spiritualness of the long ride. The power and strength of Dick Dale is that of the ocean wave or the African lion, who can crush steel pans in his mouth."

Quite. It is quickly apparent that talking to Dale is like dealing with a force of nature. Words come out in torrents. A single question about life in the desert elicits an outpouring that deals variously with civic corruption, the chemical companies polluting the ocean, the extra-terrestrials who apparently visit California on a regular basis, government cover-ups, Zen Buddhism and martial arts. "You gotta flow, like liquid, past all the trivial insecurities of earthlings," he says. "Dick Dale's surfed with the porpoises. That's spiritual."

Rather less spiritual, he lets on, is the British immigration service, which has yet to internalise the metaphysics of surfing. Dale, who until two years ago, had never played outside California, is now preparing, with his drummer Bryan Lee Brown and bassist Ron Eglit, for his first European dates. Cases of Dale's valve amplifiers lie about his home in preparation for shipping. The telephone rings incessantly, the calls fielded by Jill, Dale's 26-year-old wife. The British authorities are giving Brown hassles like this in London, England? asks a member of Dale's entourage, gesturing towards the magnificently silent landscape, yawning. "Clear skies and wheeling eagles, that surround the guitarist's ranch. 'Now, Dale growls. 'And there ain't no waves, neither."

The Mojave occupies a particular place in rock mythology. Robert Plant wrote a song named after Dale's nearest town, 29 Palms. Joshua Tree, the local national park, is filled with the spiky flora that thrive in the area and provided the title for U2's best-known album. Gram Parsons — the former Byrd and Flying Burrito — met his untimely death at the town of Joshua Tree in 1973, and his body was stolen and cremated illegally at Skull Rock.

up in the mountains. The desert, a place Dale considers synonymous with "cranial enemies", has bred its share of oddballs and rugged types. But none, one feels, odder or more rugged than Dale himself.

Dick who? Well, quite. Former surfers, who spent the early 1960s driving to such Dale hits as *Let's go Trippin'*, *Surf Beat* or *The Victor*, already knew him. The rest of us, made wise by Tarantino, may reflect on the influence Dale's style has had on subsequent music. Playing his prototype Fender Stratocaster left-handed, Dale's bass-heavy twanging and reverberated speed spawned a host of imitators, from the Beach Boys to another cacklander, Jimi Hendrix (who, when he was playing with Tare Pacheda, sought Dale out after a gig in Pasadena) and, arguably, every speed-punk band since the Ramones.

Born in south Boston, to working-class parents whose own families hailed from Lebanon and Poland, Dale grew up listening to country music, European polkas and Egyptian popular songs. Hank Williams, the cowboy singer, and Gene Krupa — for his subtle, trance-like drum rhythms — were his heroes. Moving to California at the age of 11, Dale sang country music, later winning talent contests and forming his own band, The Del-Tones. He hooked up with guitar-maker Leo Fender in 1955, and the two men set about designing and road-

testing a guitar and accompanying amplifier that would literally electrify country music.

A string of hits followed, enabling Dale to buy a seaside mansion and two Rolls-Royces, one of which now languishes in the garage of his desert ranch. A family of rats has nested in its

"You gotta flow past all the trivial insecurities. Dick Dale has surfed with

On the verge of a nervous breakthrough

It depends what your personal nightmares are. But if the idea of performing *Rule Britannia* with a flat voice and minimal training in front of a huge audience makes you wake up drenched in sweat, then you're in luck. Julia, last night's triumphant winner for the Girls (BBC1) will have been an intensely cathartic experience. How can I say this? I wept. I broke down. Only if the girls had also undertaken Sanskrit finals without preparation ("Sanskrit? But my subject wasn't Sanskrit!") could it have struck more accurately at my fearful core.

Pauline Quirke and Linda Robinson joined Lesley Garrett in spangly frocks on the stage at Kenwood House, and proceeded to sing possibly the most difficult tune ever tortured out of semi-pros, accompanied by full orchestra and climactic fireworks; and the audience, instead of lobbing bread rolls across the lake,

went wild. I'm getting overwhelmed again: I'll just — it's something to do with the little flags. This is — sorry.

As I say, it depends where your personal raw bits are. But as someone who recently declined to speak at a television conference ("Would you dry up?" asked the organiser, kindly. "No, I'd choke on my own vomit," I said), I find that other people's chutzpah makes for an uncontrollable diaphragm and a lot of salt water. Pauline and Linda are, of course, entertainers already; but by singing in the classical mode, they put themselves right in line to be jeered at, and instead carried it off magnificently. Pauline had the stronger, truer voice; but then, when you cast your mind back to the other "jobs", she was less good at angling and journalism, so it evened out.

This was the last job, and followed the usual format. The

women started off laughing, and got steadily more terrified. As they trained for their big night, they made bogus errands to gain advice from the glamorous. Edward Heath, breaking from orchestra rehearsals in Oxford, informed them that the line was "rule the waves", not "rules the waves", at which they smiled and nodded, knowing the words already. But getting David Emmanuel to design the frocks was a good idea: their scene with him was hilarious. "Now," he said, "what about legs?" "I'll concede them on the night," snatched Pauline. Fluffy.

A cockney girl with a rather different temperament is Michelle Fowler, who last night in EastEnders (BBC1) made her big decision whether to leave Walford (scene of misery, gun attacks, etcetera) and join Big Geoff in Scotland (nice house, great countryside, fresh salmon). Would



Lynne Truss

she choose happiness? Well, it seemed unlikely, given past events. Played by the excellent Susan Tully, Michelle is a key vertebra in the emotional backbone of *EastEnders*, and it is unthinkable that this misery-guts would choose to leave Walford. Most she had the option of thin gruel from a chipped mug. Michelle's solid fuel is resentment, in any case. Her usual expression is of

someone who has just heard about the Sanskrit exam.

But on the other hand, Susan Tully is known to be leaving the series. And there are other considerations. Daughter Vicki is reaching an age when she needs to be an actress. In Scotland, unless a spin-off series is considered, this won't matter. Clearly, last night's scriptwriter gave Michelle an argument with Grant, who told her she would never change, she would never leave Walford — "You always come running back to what you know". Now she can prove him wrong, which will make her feel better. A negative reason! And sure enough, she has told Geoff that the answer to his question is "Yes".

I have considerable fears for Michelle and Geoff in Scotland. Their house looks remote; there is talk of Michelle not needing to work. Deprived of legitimate channels for her boiling wrath, Mi-

chelle will turn inwards — argue with the deer, have feuds with the heather, and bury Geoff in the garden, having first hit him on the head with a wine bottle. Don't go. Michelle, Walford is a state of mind, and Grant is right. You always come running back to what you know.

The dangers of the remote house were brought home in *Top*, last night's *Chiller* (ITV). This story by Glenn Chandler concerned Louise (Serena Gordon) and Ray (Martin Clunes) whose first baby miscarried after a road accident. Ray's profession was less adjusting, but Louise never adjusted to the loss, and when she found she was mysteriously pregnant again, she started wondering whether it was the first baby coming back to haunt her. And it was. It was in the house, crying all the time. Yike. Meanwhile the unhelpful biddy next

door, Rosemary Leach, was a cat slave on a grand scale, which made her entirely harmless, in my opinion, and not a bit mad or sinister as heavily suggested.

Crown Prosecutor (BBC1) continues to entertain in a disastrous kind of way, but after five weeks it is surely time for the controller to run in with a fire blanket. It occurs to me that this situation might be saved by a sudden Brechtian revelation of walls collapsing and captions floating in — explaining that these people are all inmates of a secure psychiatric unit, encouraged to role-play, a bit like the old *Marat/Sade*. "This was done by Pace rules!" asked Sheila last night. "Yes, the Police and Criminal Evidence Act was followed to the letter," came the reply. Yes, it's so obvious. Only loonies write like that. *Radio Times* continues to bill Crown Prosecutor as a "fast-moving" drama series. Well, it can't move fast enough for me.

BBC1

- 6.00am Business Breakfast (10396)
- 7.00am BBC Breakfast News (9586250)
- 9.05am K100 (s) (5917521)
- 10.00am News; Regional News and Weather; Weather (Celex) (7302502)
- 10.05am EastEnders — The Early Days (i) (Celex) (819705)
- 10.35am Good Morning with Anne and Nick (s) (7661569)
- 12.00am News; Regional News and Weather; Weather (Celex) (1160950)
- 12.05pm Pebble Mill (s) (7936873)
- 12.55pm Regional News and Weather (15576279)
- 1.00am News and Weather (Celex) (91182)
- 1.30am Neighbours (s) (Celex) (77213453)
- 1.50am Crown Prosecutor, Sheila and Ben are torn between two cases. (i) (s) (Celex) (3547396)
- 2.20am Holiday, Orkney and Shetland, southern India and Miami. (i) (s) (Celex) (74264521)
- 2.50am The Flying Doctors: The Climber. David's past catches up with him. (i) (s) (Celex) (1368076)
- 3.35am Cartoons (2669786) 3.45am Bitsa (s) (2672250)
- 4.00am Jackanory: Billy Pink's Private Detective Agency (s) (4988521) 4.10am Rugsats (s) (8606415)
- 4.25am The Borrowers (s) (Celex) (9723231)
- 4.55am Newsround (6500140) 5.05am Mel Marlan and Her Merry Men (i) (Celex) (6706095)
- 5.35am Neighbours (i) (s) (Celex) (919892) Northern Ireland Inside Out (919892)
- 6.00am News and Weather (Celex) (347)
- 6.30am Regional news magazines (927) Northern Ireland Neighbours (927) Inside Out News (763076) Wales Wales Today (927)
- 7.00am Top of the Pops. A Song for Europe special with Mark Goodier. (s) (Celex) (1250)



Carole Vorderman experiments (7.30pm)

- 7.30am Tomorrow's World: Megalab 95. This Science Week special presented by Carole Vorderman, features one of the largest mass participation experiments. (s) (Celex) (811)
- 8.00am All Creatures Great and Small. Shown as a tribute to James Herriot, with an introduction by Robert Hardy. (i) (Celex) (6415)
- 9.00am Nine O'Clock News; Regional News; Weather (Celex) (7415)
- 9.30am FILM: Jagged Edge (1985). Courtroom drama about a publishing magnate accused of murdering his wife. Starring Jeff Bridges and Glenn Close. Directed by Richard Marquand. (Celex) (943699)
- 10.00am Northern Ireland Inside Out (919892) Northern Ireland Neighbours (927) Inside Out News (763076) Wales Wales Today (927)
- 11.15am FILM: Tarzan the Ape Man (1981). Remake of the 1932 film in which an explorer and his daughter make a remarkable find in the African jungle. With Burt Reynolds and Richard Harris. Directed by John Derek. (102366) Wales Paper Dragon (812366)
- 11.45am FILM: Tarzan the Ape Man (1981). 1.35am News Headlines; Weather (8369630)
- 1.05am Weather (1137833)

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As London except: 1.55 The Young Doctors (177806) 2.20am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.25am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.30am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.35am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.40am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.45am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.50am Wish You Were Here (177806) 2.55am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.00am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.05am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.10am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.15am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.20am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.25am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.30am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.35am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.40am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.45am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.50am Wish You Were Here (177806) 3.55am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.00am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.05am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.10am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.15am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.20am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.25am Wish You Were Here (177806) 4.30am Wish You Were Here (177806) 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FRIDAY MARCH 24 1995

Fjortoft joins Middlesbrough

Witschge lends Blackburn greater depth

BY RUSSELL KEMPSON AND LOUISE TAYLOR

FOOTBALL'S transfer deadline passed yesterday with little more than a whimper, barely £3 million-worth of talent changing hands compared to the figure of £7 million on the corresponding day last season. Contrary to reports earlier in the week, Brian Deane, the Leeds United forward, did not move to Everton. Chris Armstrong, the Crystal Palace striker, stayed at Selhurst Park and Les Ferdinand, the Queens Park Rangers forward, still has a future at Loftus Road.

Even Kenny Dalglish, who has spent £28.5 million since becoming manager of Blackburn Rovers in October 1991, declined to dip into the money market. He did, however, secure Richard Witschge, the Holland midfielder player, from Bordeaux on loan for the rest of the season. Witschge, 25, whose elder brother, Rob, 28, also plays for Holland, is expected to fill the gap left by Jason Wilcox, who has been ruled out for the remainder of the FA Cup Premiership run-in after knee surgery.

Witschge Jr has struggled to settle in France since his £3 million move from Ajax in 1991. Injury forced him to withdraw from the European championship finals in Sweden in 1992, when his brother was drafted in to replace him, and he also missed the World

Cup finals in the United States last summer for the same reason.

Of the few deals completed yesterday, the most expensive came in the Endersleigh Insurance League first division, when Jan Aage Fjortoft, the Norway and Swindon Town striker, moved to Middlesbrough for £1.3 million. Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, has been short of attacking options but Fjortoft, who has scored 25 goals this

season, should help alleviate the problem. "Jan has a good presence on the pitch," Robson said. "He's a top quality goalscorer and team player with good touch and control. His signing creates the sort of competition we need if we want to become a top side."

Middlesbrough, who head the first division, initially offered £1.3 million in January. Swindon then rejected Rob-

son's overtures but the Wiltshire club telephoned him on Tuesday to ask if the transfer was still on. Fjortoft 28, is the leading scorer in the first division.

Keith Lamb, the Middlesbrough chief executive, felt that the low level of transfer activity yesterday reflected a cash-flow problem within the game. "Clubs just don't have the money to buy new players, too much is tied up in wages," he said.

Fjortoft joined Swindon from Rapid Vienna in 1993 and has made no secret of his desire to return to Premiership football after Swindon's relegation last season. "I have joined the first division's top club and I think we can be back in the Premiership next season," he said. He will miss the match against Port Vale on Sunday as he is playing for Norway in a European championship qualifier against Luxembourg.

Alan Smith, the Crystal Palace manager, will be more than content to hang on to Armstrong, especially as the enigmatic striker appears to have rediscovered his appetite for goalscoring, and Smith will be equally happy with the signing of Ray Houghton, the Aston Villa midfielder player, for £300,000. The transfer was concluded only five minutes before the end of business yesterday.

After a full day of discussion over personal terms, Smith finally persuaded Houghton, 33, to return to London, where he started his career with West Ham United and Fulham. He is eligible to play in Palace's FA Cup semi-final against Manchester United on April 9 and his experience could also prove crucial in Palace's attempt to escape relegation.

However, Smith's hopes of completing a second capture were scuppered when Arsenal refused to allow Eddie McGoldrick, another Ireland international, to return to Palace, who sold him to Highbury for £1 million two years ago.

John Toshack, the former Wales manager, who was dismissed as coach of Real Sociedad earlier this season, will manage Deportivo La Coruña next year, Augusto Lendoiro, the Deportivo president, said yesterday. He will replace Arsenio Iglesias, the present coach, who said in January he would not renew his contract at the end of this season, after five years at the Riazor stadium.

Cooper, 39, loses fight for life

DAVID COOPER, the former Scotland winger, died in the Southern General hospital, Glasgow, yesterday after suffering a brain haemorrhage (Kevin McCarr writes). Cooper, 39, spent the bulk of his career with Rangers, but also played for Motherwell and laterally had returned to Clydebank, his first club.

Cooper joined Rangers from Clydebank in 1977 and, in the 12 years he spent at Ibrox, won three championships, three Scottish Cups and seven League Cups.

Ally McCoist, the Rangers forward, said: "I feel as though I have lost a brother. He left to join Motherwell a few years ago, but I felt he had never really been away because you would often see him about the place. David Cooper will always be a part of Rangers."

Cooper helped engineer Motherwell's re-emergence and he was a member of the side which won the Scottish Cup in 1991. The winger was capped for his country on 22 occasions. His flamboyant skill and obvious love of the game will make him one of the most fondly remembered footballers in Scotland.

Obituary, page 19



Alesi, the Ferrari driver, confers with technicians during testing for the Brazilian Grand Prix at the Interlagos track in São Paulo yesterday

Mansell is blameless, says Dennis

FROM OLIVER HOLT
IN SÃO PAULO

NIGEL MANSELL'S uncanny talent for commandeering attention even when he is not part of the action came to the fore again yesterday. As the Williams and Benetton Formula One teams continued preparing quietly and purposefully for the first qualifying session of the new season here today, McLaren descended deeper into agonies of self-examination and self-criticism over the absence of their new recruit.

Despite the extreme discomfort he suffered in the cramped cockpit of the McLaren-Mercedes, it emerged that Mansell pleaded with Ron Dennis, the team's managing director, to be allowed to drive the car here this weekend. Dennis talked him out of it and even suggested yesterday it may be three races, not two,

before the new car is ready for him.

Flanked by Mika Hakkinen and Mark Blundell, Mansell's replacement, Dennis talked frankly for the first time about the embarrassment the team has suffered. He exonerated Mansell of any blame for the situation. "It is not easy to take the public criticism that has been heaped upon us," he said, "but it is the professional thing to do."

Dennis, who achieved unprecedented success with the team in the last decade with Alain Prost and Ayrton Senna, did not duck any questions and admitted that if mistakes were made in the building of the new car, Mansell would miss the third race of the season at Imola and would not begin his season until May in Spain.

"We have already built the mock-up of the new chassis," Dennis said. "Nigel sat in it on

Sunday and suffice it to say you could fit a stereo and air conditioning in it now. I am still hopeful he will be back for Imola but we have made fools of ourselves once and I do not want to do it again."

He admitted the team had erred in not leaving any margin for a broader shouldered driver to sit in the car

Green light for season 35
Drivers and teams 35

and estimated that the redesign would cost the team about £500,000. He said bringing to Mansell's elbows was the main problem, something accentuated by his energetic driving style.

"I nearly fell off my chair during lunch with Nigel on Sunday when he expressed the desire to drive the car as it was," Dennis said. "In the end

the conclusion was still that it was not the right thing to do to race the car. But he will be testing it in its present configuration."

"The sceptics said that if the car was two seconds a lap quicker Nigel would have made sure he was in it and they are surely right. But he would not have been able to do more than two or three laps. He would have tried to go through the pain barrier but doing one quick lap and a whole race are entirely different things. It would just not have been possible."

Ironically, McLaren's performance improved dramatically in their final day of testing in Portugal this week and the team is looking forward to wiping the smiles off a few faces with their performance here. "The only way to do that is to beat them," Dennis said.

Damon Hill and Michael

Schumacher both looked relaxed as they prepared to embark on another season of rivalry and Hill, in particular, is exuding a quiet air of confidence. Williams's poise has been unaffected by the presence of armed guards around the team owner, Frank Williams, a precaution the team has adopted for the last four years and apparently unrelated to any fears they may have about followers of Senna who may blame the team for his death.

Hill concentrated on the racing in prospect and said there would be no pre-season handshake with the young German. "I have not come here to make friends," he said. "It is not good to get close to your rivals because there needs to be a certain amount of friction between you to make sure you are motivated. I just want to get on with it now."

Strong wind a breeze for Pavin and Sauers

FROM JOHN HOPKINS, GOLF CORRESPONDENT, IN PONTE VEDRA

A STRONG wind blew at Ponte Vedra Beach here in Florida yesterday, swirling around among the tall pines and kicking up ripples on the ponds and lakes, making the par 72 of the stadium course at the Tournament Players' Club a reasonable target. Yet such is the strength in depth of international golf these days that the leaders after the first round of the Players' Championship returned scores that would have been acceptable on a day of little or no wind.

Corey Pavin, 66, and Gene Sauers, 67, were the men to set the standard for the day. For a while, Greg Norman had the American pair's scores in his sights. The Australian had four birdies in five holes in the middle of his round and, with seven holes to play, looked likely to return a score that would have set him off on a satisfactory defence of the title that he won so thrillingly and convincingly last year. However, a run of five putts paid to that and Norman finished with a 70, two under par.

Anyone who has watched Colin Montgomerie of late will have taken one look at the way that his round was going and ducked. Double bogeys on two of the four short holes and on the 18th, where he hit his drive into the water that runs up the left of the hole, would, surely, mean that the Scotsman would leave the course with steam rising out of his ears?

How wrong can one be? Bill Ferguson, Montgomerie's long-time teacher and the professional at Ilkley in Yorkshire, had walked all the way round with Montgomerie and suggested that the score bore no resemblance to the way

that his protégé had played. "It was just one of those days," Ferguson, a Yorkshireman, said.

Then Montgomerie confirmed it. The man, whose fuse has been ignited by a score as seemingly respectable as a 70 or a 71, was this time to be seen joking about his seven-over-par total because it seemed so improbable.

"It's a long way to come for a 79," Montgomerie said, his sun-tanned face wreathed in smiles. "It is very disappointing. This is a \$3 million (£2 million) tournament and I

scored 79. Thank God it's not the Masters." Amid a catalogue of misfortune, the sort of round when all the worst things happen with few if any ameliorating influences, Montgomerie cited the 17th as being typical of the way in which his day had gone. The 17th is the hole with the green that is almost completely encircled by water. On a windy day such as yesterday, the small green becomes a very difficult target.

Montgomerie stood on the tee and felt the wind on his

face. After consulting his yardage book and talking to Alistair McLean, his caddie, he chose an eight-iron. "I had 151 yards to the back of the green which, with the wind, made it about 160 yards," Montgomerie said later. "I punched an eight-iron and what happens? It went over the green and into the water."

On the 3rd, he had three-putted, compounding his error of missing the green from the tee. On the 18th, his drive started so far left that a marshal on the tee was indicating that it was going to be out of play almost as soon as Montgomerie had hit it.

By comparison, David Feherty's 73 was a tidy score, though it contained three birdies and four bogeys. Feherty's concentration was not at its best, for, seeing a friend from England in mid-round, he called out a welcome and began asking about important matters, such as the rugby scores and the like.

"I've got to be more patient," Feherty said. "You'd have thought that, by my age, I'd have realised that. I can't hit the ball much better than I am at present. I just have to learn to hit it less often."

□ Derrick Cooper and Richard Boxall, two of the most experienced golfers on the European PGA Tour, will today seek to become only the fifth pair to win the Sunningdale foursomes for a second time. Cooper, from Warrington, and Boxall, from Camberley, were the winners three years ago and yesterday won two matches to reach the semi-finals once again.

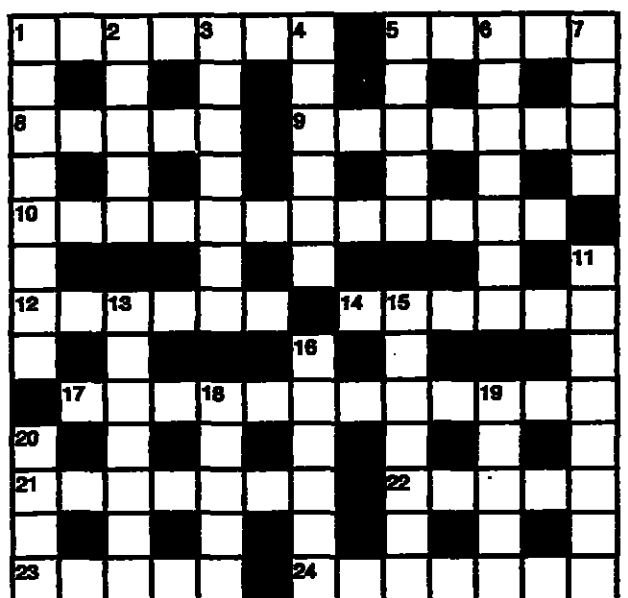
Stradwick shines, page 38

YESTERDAY'S TOP TRANSFERS

Player	From	To	Fee (£)
J A Fjortoft	Swindon	Middlesbrough	1,300,000
B Angell	Everton	Sunderland	600,000
M van der Gaag	PSV Eindhoven	Motherwell	400,000
J Drysdale	Newcastle	Swindon	340,000
R Houghton	Aston Villa	Crystal Palace	300,000
P Whelan	Ipwich	Middlesbrough	300,000
C Swales	Dorchester	Ipwich	225,000
J Taylor	Bradford	Luton	200,000
C Boden	Aston Villa	Derby	150,000

OTHERS: I Bogie (Leyton D to R Vale, £20,000); D Roche (Dorchester to Southampton, £20,000); M Lloyd-Williams (Barnet to Scunthorpe, £10,000); K Olsen (Luton to Millwall, £10,000); A Goffey (Middlesbrough to Bristol R, £10,000); D Hines (Rotherham to Chesterfield, £10,000); D O'Brien (Cambridge to Northampton, £10,000); D Thompson (Barnet to Doncaster, £10,000); P M. Chesterton (Chesterfield to Colchester), P. Devonport (St. Johnstone to Stirling), A. Fielding (Sheff U to Grimsby); I. Ikonaka (Stockport to Scunthorpe); P. Millson (Bristol C to Cardiff); J. Reeves (Bournemouth to Heston); G. Shaw (Stoke to Rochdale); M. Sykes (Stoke to Millwall).

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD



No 428

ACROSS

- 1 Dolphin (killer) whale; heavy breather (7)
- 5 Seashore (5)
- 8 Find by detective work (5)
- 9 Go backwards (in development) (7)
- 10 Trick meanly (2,3,5,2)
- 12 Sharp-witted (6)
- 14 Hurry up! (4,2): a lure (4-2)
- 17 Impossible to reach (12)
- 21 Himalayan peak (7)
- 22 Eat hugely; geog. feature (5)
- 23 Jeans cloth (5)
- 24 Pull out (7)

DOWN

- 1 Start to fancy oneself (3,5)
- 2 Separated (5)
- 3 Hand over; in attendance (7)
- 4 Aircraft operational flight (6)
- 5 Highly prejudiced person (5)
- 6 Very impressive (7)
- 7 Soothe; silence (4)
- 11 Intrinsic (8)
- 13 Abbey, inspired Wordsworth (7)
- 15 As soon as seen (2,5)
- 16 Mild, kindly (6)
- 18 Top of milk, society (5)
- 19 Now Myanmar: WW2 Road (5)
- 20 Make (one's way) (4)

SOLUTION TO NO 427

ACROSS: 1 Pibroch 5 Brand 8 Tense 9 Garotte 10 Rousseau 11 Miss 13 Pigheadedness 16 Crag 17 Wide-body 20 Messiah 21 Erica 22 Codex 23 Yashmak
DOWN: 1 Pit-prop 2 Bantu 3 Overseer 4 High and mighty 5 Bark 6 Astride 7 Dregs 12 Idleness 14 Grassed 15 Skylark 16 Conic 18 Opium 19 Minx

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